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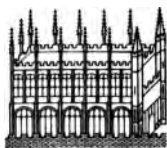
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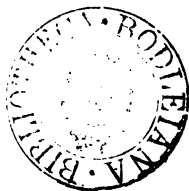
THE RUINED PEER.

BY MARIA PRISCILLA SMITH.

"Social labour is the daily and obligatory toil of every man who participates in the dangers and benefits of society. The general good of humanity as the object of life, moral reason as guide, conscience as judge."—
LAMARTINE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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CASTLE-DELORAINÉ ;

OR

THE RUINED PEER.

CHAPTER I.

A PERIOD of three months has intervened since last we stood on the picturesque cliffs of the island with Ellen and her lover. In the gratification of his first and only passion, and the prolonged absence of his father, Harry Thornton had almost forgotten that an obstacle had ever existed to the enjoyment of his present felicity. With the facility of a sanguine mind, he had lost sight also of the more prosaic realities of his situation, and abandoned himself without reserve to his former habits of profusion—habits checked

for a time by his father's avowal of impending ruin, but into which his present situation irresistibly tempted him to relapse. Trained from the very years of childhood in expensive habits, he lost no time in surrounding Ellen with all the luxuries of fashionable life. Their residence had been at first taken ready furnished, but scarcely a week passed before London upholsterers were summoned to fit it up in a new and better style, while choice pictures and articles of *vertù* gave it that air of refinement which, to those habituated to it, is almost a necessary of life. A magician might have waved his wand over the place, so speedy and complete was its transformation, and scarcely a day passed without Captain Thornton making some fresh addition to the abode of his beautiful wife. Yet this, after all, was a half-selfish mode of testifying his love, for these costly environments were far more necessary to him, than they were to the woman whom he surrounded with them.

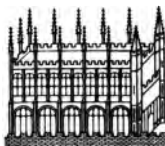
It is a glorious summer morning when we re-visit the spot which we will call for the sake of distinction, St. Mary's Cliff, and exercise our privilege of invisibly noting the passing events at our hero's abode. There is a certain listlessness on the handsome features of Harry Thornton, as

he strolls along the beach, with his attention divided between his own thoughts and watching the movements of his Newfoundland dog swimming in the waves of the tide at his feet. Can it be the shade of the Venetian *jalousie*, or is there a paler tint of the rose on Ellen's cheek than we have seen before? She leans over a writing-desk on which some loose sheets are lying—are they letters or a diary? Ah, the latter: shall we transcribe it?

“ St. Mary's Cliff, June 20th.—It is a fortnight to-day since the evening we arrived here; how rapidly has the time flown in this beautiful solitude! Yet, though the interval has been brief, it has not been without its changes, for a complete metamorphosis has taken place throughout the villa. Harry protested he could not endure the idea of my passing even a few months in a dwelling not specially fitted-up for my abode, and insisted on giving the necessary orders for its renovation. He declared it to be the happiest hour in his life when we explored the grounds and found an excellent site for a conservatory, where I have now a splendid collection of plants; and can gather my geraniums within sight and sound of the blue waves of the Channel. Yes; nothing



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seat on St. Mary's Cliff, while he described the glowing skies of Italy, and his desire to re-visit that beautiful land with myself. It recalled all the splendid descriptions of ancient art in Corinne to my mind, and I involuntarily thanked my happier fate that I should gaze on those classic shrines without the misery of a disappointed affection preying on my heart which afflicted hers.

"June 28th.—To-day has brought me a new proof of my husband's affection. I had just risen from my harp, when the sound of wheels attracted my attention, and I perceived a fairy-like equipage, drawn by four Shetland ponies, approaching. Another minute, and my husband bounded in, in his highest spirits, declaring me his prisoner for the rest of the day, which he insisted on spending among the beautiful ruins of C——, some few miles distant. The ponies are beautiful little creatures, and so docile that I can already drive them myself. I asked him where he procured them, in a locality so far from their native hills; but my Harry says his presents are fairy gifts, and I must not ask where they come from.

"July 3rd.—I often recall my old aspirations after fame: how unutterably worthless it seems

compared with my present happiness! It is the tinsel crown of a stage-queen by the side of real jewels! Yes, however gifted a woman of genius may be, fame never yet could satisfy the yearnings of her woman's heart — it is love, and love alone in which she finds the true element of her existence! There is a thousand-fold more bliss in the feeling of dependence on the cares of the beloved one, than all the satisfaction which the pride of talent could give in its room!

“July 7th. — We drove to Cowes to-day. Harry insisted on my examining a new yacht, which has been recently built there, according to his orders. It is a beautiful vessel: he says he shall call it “The Ellen,” and that I must accompany him on a cruise to the Mediterranean. I asked him the fate of “The Ariel” which I have so often heard him mention, but he said her cabin accommodations were only fit for a bachelor; and that swiftness was of no importance in his eyes, compared to the facility afforded by this one for my accompanying him in his excursions.

“July 9th.—What a happy day has this been; am I the most fortunate of my sex—or is my Harry as I often believe him to be—an exception

to the rest of his own—the most perfect of mankind?

“July 10.—Spent the morning in practising my husband’s favourite songs; and the evening in sailing on the bay.

“July 13th.—Harry has been engaged to-day in making arrangements for the transport of a portion of his stud from town. Last week he decided they should remain in London. It appears somewhat capricious so suddenly to alter his arrangements, but no doubt he has some reason for the change, which I am not aware of. I can understand Harry’s great partiality for horses; they are noble animals, and deserve the care and attention often bestowed on them. I confess too I should never adopt as a wife, the practice of inducing my husband to give up the pursuits and amusements he followed before marriage; there appears to me something selfish in such a course, and I should feel more pleasure in seeing my Harry’s noble figure in the hunt at Melton, than I should have in giving way to any selfish fears by detaining him by my side.

“July 16th.—It is now five weeks since my wedding-day, already the honeymoon, as it is termed in matrimony, is past. How poor, how trivial must be the affection which can suffer dimi-

nution in so brief an interval! Yet the day of our union was not without its misgivings; and I believe it to be impossible for a woman to go to the altar without many a sigh and regret given to the careless days of her girlhood, and that purely unreflective happiness which can never be her's again.

"July 17th.—To-day has brought me another gift from my husband. It is a beautiful mare, highly trained for a lady's use. Harry says she must be called 'Zillah,' since she is of Arabian descent. As I am naturally fearless, I have no fear of mounting her, although I never rode on horseback before. But I was astonished when I accidentally learnt the large sums which Harry is in the habit of giving for his horses; for educated on the Continent, one is only imperfectly acquainted with the value of these things. What a princely income an English nobleman must require to keep up his stud and establishment! But how could I utter a single caution when my Harry embraced me, and declared a hundred guineas more or less was not worth naming when a gift for 'his Ellen' was purchased?

"July 19th.—Zillah is as perfect in her paces, as she is beautiful in her shape and appearance. Harry declared himself astonished at the success

of my untaught horsemanship, and certainly I have acquired many accomplishments without the formal instruction many girls require. I must not, however, even suffer the pleasure of this new and exhilarating exercise to make me forget to study the new opera which Harry gave me yesterday; it is a magnificent composition, and I must not fail to do it justice.

“July 20th.—We read Shelley while watching the sun-set from my favourite seat on St. Mary’s Cliff last evening. How grand, yet how mournful are those invocations of Prometheus! Harry says the mental struggles of the glorious but captive Titan always suggest to him the comparison of that masterpiece of ancient art, the agonies of the Laocoon. But to me, Prometheus is the history of suffering humanity in all times and nations, from the Pagan era to our own. It is a passionate protest against the mysterious dispensation of evil in the world; the first, though not last, conflict between man’s reason on the one hand, and his faith and belief in tradition arrayed against him on the other! What sublime allegories were those of the ancient world! The mythology of the Greeks was poetical as classic art, and voluptuously beautiful as their glowing clime! Yes, I agree with Harry when he says

that was the epoch of true poetry—the Golden Age of the world; when every spot was hallowed by some graceful or touching superstition, every passion of man's nature was personified, and he found a divinity in each tree and fountain that reared its foliage, or threw its spray to the cloudless azure of a Grecian sky. Such a religion was the very poetry of Nature! Harry says he will read aloud to me some of the translations from the classics—he is sure I should appreciate them so well.

“July 22nd.—We did not ride this morning; but Harry sang with me the duets in the new opera, and we looked over the new works which have just arrived from town. I have received no letter from Madame Leclercq; yet her silence rarely causes me any regret, and I find myself becoming indifferent to the good or bad opinion of the whole world, so long as I retain the affections of my husband.

“July 23rd.—Harry has been much annoyed to-day. It seems that he cannot succeed in obtaining the necessary accommodation here for the rest of his stud; it has vexed him a good deal, and he even expressed a desire to leave St. Mary's in consequence. But it cannot surely be a matter of such importance to him as to make him quit the Island.

“July 24th.—Harry has decided on sending the greater part of his stud back to town; but the necessity of the step still annoys him, and I could only sympathize with his vexation without power to remove the cause.”

CHAPTER II.

Letter from Lord Deloraine to his Son.

Place de —, Paris, August 2.

“DEAR HARRY,

“Have you taken a Chinese tour, or merely a short trip to Siberia, that it is nearly three months since you gave your fond and affectionate parent a specimen of your caligraphy? That last epistle, by the bye, was quite a solemn affair in its way; and there was an ominous paragraph in which you announced a particular request to be made me on my return. My dear boy,—always remember one thing—you may ask me for anything in the world—but money! Money—sublime, all-potent, conquering spell—which can buy us beauty and fidelity—a senatorial toga, a soldier’s uniform, or a churchman’s benefice,—

money, I say, evaporates from one's pocket in dear, deluding Paris, like the spray from a Versailles fountain, or as if there was some mysterious ingredient in the gases of a Parisian atmosphere which dissolved it away, till, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision, it left nought' but an empty purse 'behind.' If I were not anticipating a certain lucky event, or rather the advent of a young lady, with the transfer of more attractive metal from the golden region of Portland Place, I should be at this moment *au desespoir*, or defending 'my own good hall' of Castle-Delorraine against sheriffs' writs, and a posse comitatus. Seriously, my dear boy, it is high time, if you value your earthly possessions, that you decided the matter; for melancholy forebodings often haunt me during even that time 'beloved by gods and men,' the dinner-hour; and my agent has just sent me a most unreasonable letter, saying that he can only remit me a paltry couple of thousands for present emergencies. I met Gray yesterday in the Rue de Rivoli; he could not tell me if the Marsdens were returned to town, but said you were rusticated at some place near Cowes. Are you yachting there? There is no news worth mentioning. Next month I return to London; I had intended going to Lord Glenmorris's place in

the north, but having been mercifully apprized by a friend of certain damaging reports applying equally to his *ménage* and his moors, I abandoned the project. Did I libel the dear, good people here, and say there was no news, when they've got up a perfect novelty in the shape of an elopement within the last three days. In Paris—well-regulated Paris, where married couples are discreet enough to screen their failings and their *faux-pas* from the public gaze and Doctor's Commons, the thing creates a regular *furor*; and my fair friends ask me with true Parisian *naïveté*,—why did they go? and, how much better to have quietly staid at home! But to facts. You know the portly Bishop of Donoughmore, who lives in that splendid hotel in the Place Vendôme, and his wife Lady Arabella ——. She is twenty years younger than himself; a charming little brunette, who says the most piquant things imaginable; with black eyes, white teeth, and a mouth—pshaw! a young fellow like you can finish the sentence better than I can.

“Now, the favourite *habitué* of her ladyship's *salons* was a certain Count Adolphe de St. Marie. He spent his mornings in her boudoir, he caracoled by her side in the Bois de Boulogne, and he

lingered last in her box at the opera. The Count was splendidly handsome, three-and-twenty, and, above all, he did not lack that greatest charm in women's eyes—the prestige of former *bonnes fortunes* with the sex.

“It was the bishop's birth-day. His cook had surpassed himself; and the right reverend prelate, as his chaplain murmured a brief grace, inwardly thanked a merciful Providence that had spared the temporalities of an Irish Church, and blest him with an unimpaired digestion at fifty-five. Count Adolphe joined the dinner-party; he was more witty than usual, and with admirable tact postponed his best bon-mots till their appreciation no longer interfered with that of the repast. That finished, the Bishop, as was his wont, sought his cushions of eider-down for a temporary repose; while her youthful ladyship withdrew to a small garden-pavilion, in which she had of late somewhat capriciously insisted on spending her evenings.

“The Bishop's slumbers were profound; but at length he awoke—where was coffee, the Count, and Lady Arabella?

“It is said that the butler at once surmised the truth; but the faithful servant (having reason to think his master's will was incomplete) forbore to

make known the afflicting discovery till he had taken counsel with the Bishop's medical attendant in the morning. But his lordship survived it (whether he derived consolation from religion or his lawyer is more than I can inform you); and a paragraph in Galignani's announced, that the reverend prelate was about to return to his episcopal duties in the diocese of Donoughmore. *Le pauvre Adolphe* is in Italy, and probably in Dr. ——'s court by this time, tasting the pleasures of love, or rather learning the price, which we English, being a nation addicted to barter and traffic even to the sale of our wives, set upon them.

"Now let me add the moral to my story. Never commit the folly of an elopement, my dear boy, for the *éclat* attending it is perfectly unnecessary with one-half the sex; and above all things, follow that useful commandment which prohibits you making love to your neighbour's wife—the costs of that style of amusement are so deucedly heavy afterwards. I speak from experience, having tried it myself; and though I confess the pursuit was exciting, the prize I never found worth the money. N.B.—That sentence ought to be stereotyped for the use of the rising generation. At twenty-two we adore a fine

woman, at thirty we are decidedly less susceptible to the influence of the sex, and at forty-five our affections are centred in a good dinner. "Now, my dear Harry, you are in the age of romantic theories, fancying yourself, perhaps, a victim to that epidemic disorder of youth we term love. A few years later, my dear boy, your heart will still be in its place, but—'tis a physiological fact—all its tender sensibilities will be transferred to the stomach. You will think less of a woman's smile than a glass of Curaçoa; and the ruby lips of your lady-love at twenty will not bear a comparison with your favourite *plat*, dressed with the inspiration of a Soyer. It is not his relatives, my dear boy, that a rich man weeps to leave on his death-bed; it is his well-stocked cellar, and his *cuisine*,—the last dozen of that celebrated vintage which his medical man will not allow him to finish; the artist who has been the glory of his establishment, and who he knows will enter the service of his rival in dinner-giving, the millionaire who lives on the opposite side of the way; the pictures that will come to the hammer, and the favourite hunters that his graceless nephews will henceforth ride. How thoughtful and affectionate are those young men at this important juncture

—big with the fate of consols and of acres! How anxiously they deprecate his long interviews with his lawyer, in the fear that a codicil and a bequest to the county hospital may shipwreck all their chance of a legacy! “’Tis a touching sight, this; and how often seen in the world! But a truce to the subject. I shall find you in town, I suppose, on my return. Did you know that I gave orders for the left wing of Castle Deloraine to be restored; sent Pugin to inspect the chapel; and —— to modernize the rooms, anticipating the old place might again become the residence of a lady?

“I am going to feed with the Marquis de —— this evening, and my valet has been waiting this half-hour; so believe me, in haste,

“Faithfully yours,

“DELORAINÉ.”

“P.S.—Private intelligence has arrived respecting the bereaved bishop. The reverend prelate is no worse—and his cook has confidentially informed a brother-artist that ‘he can bring him through.’ Does not this go to prove the truth of my theory? If the soul of the famous cook of Lucullus had migrated into the

frame of Charon, the ancients would have ceased to consider the Elysian Fields as the abode of the blessed; and how willingly they would have set forth on the journey!"

CHAPTER III.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“JULY 26th.—I confess I feel uneasy at the prolonged absence of Lord Deloraine. Sanguine as I am that he will forgive our hasty marriage, I could wish that this trial of his paternal affection was past. The pride of the English aristocracy is great; and what noble house is there that would not have welcomed my Harry into its circle? I have not—I could not—cherish a doubt of my husband's love for me; but he says that prudence requires our marriage should be kept secret till Lord Deloraine's return, and I cannot but feel anxious for the moment to arrive, in which we may fearlessly proclaim it to the world. Sometimes I wish that Harry would risk his father's displeasure, and inform him of his marriage without further delay. But this is a selfish

desire on my part; ought I to murmur at a little procrastination, when precipitancy might be dangerous to his interests?

“ July 27th.—Several letters came for Harry this morning. I was in hopes one might be from his father, and asked if Lord Deloraine had written? It is impossible the question could have displeased Harry, but he only uttered a simple negative by way of reply, and was silent the whole of breakfast time. No doubt he feels the same lively anxiety as myself; but how I wish he would confide it to me! In the evening, he recovered his spirits; made me sing some of his favourite songs to him, as we sat by moonlight in the grounds, and passionately embraced me as he declared I was the only woman he could ever love.

“ July 29th.—My husband is again evidently ill-at-ease to-day; what is the cause? Why will he not tell it me? Oh, he cannot doubt my affection, or that there is any sacrifice which I would not make for his sake! We rode out as usual; I sang him his favourite songs, but he declined to take a part in them, and seemed anxiously thinking on something which absorbed his whole attention. It is evident that the letters which he received yesterday have greatly annoyed him in some way, but what was the nature of

their contents I cannot tell. Surely to-morrow he will make the cause of his annoyance known to me: is it not the dearest prerogative of a wife to share her husband's sorrows, as well as participate in his happiness?

" July 30th.—Harry was in his usual buoyant spirits to-day, and appeared to have forgotten his yesterday's annoyance. We rode along the shore for some miles, the sea reflecting a thousand tints from the crimson and golden clouds of the evening sky, and studded with the white sails of the fishing-boats that were leaving harbour for their nightly cruise. I found myself forgetting my fears of yesterday in the beauty of the scene and hour, which forcibly recalled the first evening we spent here; and my spirits became so buoyant that Harry could not have detected a shade of pensiveness in my conversation.

" July 31st.—Finished reading the play of King Lear this morning, in company with my husband. Surely the most tragic page of human woe that ever was written! Even the despair of Hamlet cannot equal in my eyes the desolation of the parent's heart, when he says—

'Thou think'st too much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin; so 'tis to thee.
But where the greater malady is first,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear,

But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth; when the mind's free
The body's delicate; the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is't not as if this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to it? But I will punish home;
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out!—pour on, I will endure,
In such a night as this? Oh Regan! Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all.
Oh, that way madness lies, let me shun that!
No more o' that——'

What a profound knowledge of the human heart is here—there is not a passage in all the play which shows it more than Lear's transition from despair to madness. The very fools of Shakespeare have a certain wisdom curiously tempered with their disordered intellects. But the one who figures so conspicuously in "Lear" is not a fool in the ordinary sense of the word—he is the faithful servitor disguising stern words of truth and bitter warning in the phraseology of a court-jester, shrouding wisdom in a jest, and concealing affection for his forlorn old master in a hairbrained quibble. How wondrously versatile was the intellect which could write such a passage, yet revel at will in the glittering fantastic fancies of a 'Midsummer Night's Dream'!

“August 2nd.—To-day has renewed my fears. No; I cannot bring myself to write them on the pages which have chronicled such happiness.

“August 3rd.—Is it fancy? Have my fears deceived me, or are they indeed too true? Alas! to-day again I ask myself the question, yet shrink from the answer.—Oh, no! he cannot, will not alter towards me! Something has vexed him.—Are we not all alike imperfect in our tempers and dispositions?

“After all, it may be my fault. I am too exacting, too *exigeante*—all my thoughts and feelings find in him their centre; and men, besides domestic cares, have so many other calls on their attention! But it is four o’clock; he will return soon, and this weary morning will have passed away. I will bathe my eyes and dress—he shall not perceive any thing has affected me.

“August 4th.—How happy was last evening; how vividly did it recall to my mind the first blissful month of our sojourn here, and yet it is only a few days since that I have had these painful misgivings. But all must be well again after last night. Let me dwell on the particulars.—It was somewhat later than I expected when he came in, looking so gay and animated, called me ‘his Ellen,’ embraced me—in one word, was himself again! Then, after playfully trying to make

me jealous (are we not like two children, when we play at aping the 'green-eyed monster'); he told me he had rode on to Cowes, and produced the last new opera he had bought expressly for me. The airs in it are exquisitely beautiful; certainly this new thing is one of Verdi's most successful efforts—but my spirits were so elated when I sang them, that the vein of sadness which runs throughout the music allotted to the heroine in the second act, jarred almost unpleasantly with my pleasurable feelings. I think Harry perceived it, for he placed one of his old favourites on the piano, and I was delighted when he asked me to sing it. Ah, the recollections connected with that song—it was the first I ever sang to him, and for many, many weeks, he would never retire to rest without hearing it. But I must not write longer; it is a glorious morning, and he wishes to drive me to the ruins of C——, some miles distant.

“August 5th.—Again has my fragile fabric of happiness been dashed to the ground! All was well until he received that letter. I cannot hazard a conjecture as to the contents; but how changed he has been since their perusal! He was reading it as I entered, and a glance at the seal showed me the well-known crest of Lord Deloraine! My heart beat—I struggled hard to

conceal my agitation at the thought that already his father might be in England, and the long-expected hour was at hand, which was to decide our happiness or misery.—I say our, for I cannot, even in one's most desponding moments, refuse to believe that my Harry's happiness does not depend on the issue as well as my own. I asked after his father's movements; he started at the sound of my voice, and hurriedly replied that he was still abroad—was not returning, in fact, till the following month! My heart sank within me. Could I feel again that entire, undoubting confidence in Harry which I had till lately, I would not care for the lapse of time, or dependence on Lord Deloraine's caprice; but now, all seems changed. To proceed—Harry must have perceived my paleness and agitation, for he suddenly threw down the letter, and began consoling me for the intelligence. Alas! it was not with his old tenderness—he appeared annoyed at what he termed my over-sensitive fears; nor did he propose to write, disclosing our marriage to his father, and thus end our suspense at once. Can he feel the same anxiety for its termination as I do? After breakfast he resumed reading the letter, and I tried to occupy myself with finishing the sketch of the ruins I took yesterday; but I could

not help observing his altered expression. He rose from his seat, and paced the room, evidently vexed at the contents, and, abruptly crushing the letter in his hand, threw it into the fire-grate. It was in vain that I asked him the reason of his annoyance; he turned the conversation on something else, and the groom coming to announce his horse was ready, nothing more passed.

August 6th.—I am mistaken; oh, how wrongfully I have accused him! I thought him changed and capricious. No; he is still the same—still my Harry. I will not give way to these foolish, yet painful doubts again. This morning he found me trying over some of the airs in the new opera; and I was so intent on my task, that I was not aware of his presence until I had finished. One must identify oneself with the sorrows and joys of a poet's creating, with every passion shaped forth in a composer's music, to realize the ideal of both, and make them clear and tangible to the ear. Therein lies the art of all good acting—that it shall become nature. That morning I achieved it; seldom had I sung better than when in pouring forth those plaints of a broken heart, I felt I was giving utterance to the fears and forebodings of my own—the last note—the last cadence trembled on my lips, when I heard a footstep

behind me, and found myself clasped in my husband's arms! Joy, surprise, self-reproach reigned in my mind by turns; I neither asked nor even felt a wish to have explained his unsatisfactory conduct in the morning—he loved me still, and that was sufficient.

“Evening.—Yet in the midst of his renewed tenderness I perceive a care, a cloud on his brow that had no place there before. It is evident that he has some cause for anxiety or discomfort, how I wish he would confide it to me! He looks absent, pre-occupied, and is frequently silent. Last evening we read, and watched the sun set from St. Mary's Cliff, and the beauty of the scene scarcely elicited a remark from him. But courage! I will have faith in him,—patience as regards myself,—all will be well if I can only regain the confidence he once placed in me.

“August 7th.—A vexatious occurrence has happened to-day; dear Harry's favourite horse has fallen lame. It has evidently annoyed him a good deal, and, at first, he imagined it was caused by some neglect on the part of the groom; but that did not appear to me to be the case. Poor Sultan! I accompanied Harry to the stable to see him, and the noble creature pawed the ground, and glanced round him with his fiery eye, as if yearning for the free air, and

a gallop on the broad, smooth sands again. I confess I was afterwards surprised to find Harry had so summarily dismissed the groom, when the man certainly did not appear to me to have been in fault,—of course Harry can judge best, but is it not a pity he should allow the matter to vex and irritate him so much?

“It is four o’clock: for the first time Harry has left me alone for a whole day. I perceived he was restless during luncheon, and it was scarcely removed when he told me he must go to Tattersall’s, and should not return before the following evening. Did he think I should oppose his journey when he hurried so quickly away? Ah, he need not have feared, nothing would make me doubt him, but his own conduct and these long and trying delays.

“August 8th.—I sedulously occupied myself this morning, to banish all painful forebodings from my mind. But it was in vain. I regretted Lord Delorainé’s absence. I longed for the hour to come when I might fearlessly avow my marriage to the whole world. I wished to remove every suspicion from the mind of Madame Leclercq; for I could not help remembering that, whatever might have been her failings, she had been a protectress to me. And memory brought before me the night of my

elopement; the clouds drifting across the sky, and the summer-rain falling on the fresh green foliage; the misgivings of the hour when I decided my fate, and my affection for Harry which so quickly overcame them. Have I done right? Can Lord Deloraine prove implacable! For the sake of wealth, or an aristocratic lineage, will he disown the woman for his daughter that his son has made his wife? Oh, God, surely it can never prove my fate to be the innocent cause of his ruin? The affection that would fain shield him from every harm, bring him to ruin, or deprive him of a father's blessing! Yet how could I resist his impassioned pleadings, the promptings of my heart, as well as his own? I thought again of his father, his possible pride and worldliness, and then of my own. And I rose and paced the room; my form dilated as I glanced in the mirror, and proudly asked if beauty and fidelity were not worth the quarterings of a Norman line, and the conventional distinctions of the world? Distinctions between beings made alike in the image of their Maker,—is not the thought a blasphemy on the God of all? But it was a more painful fear than that which made my cheek turn pale, and my woman's heart to tremble. Did an hour of trial come, would the husband for whom I had

sacrificed so much, continue to love me, and uncomplainingly endure poverty for my sake ? No, no ! I could not doubt that. Aye, let poverty and ruin, or a parent's anger fall upon us, and so long as that support fails me not, shall I be found wanting in fortitude to endure the rest ? Let not that trial come. Oh God, may I never find that 'the reed I leant upon in trust has pierced me,'—the chosen of my heart ungrateful,—the 'golden image to be made of clay !'

"Night.—Nine, ten o'clock had chimed from the French *pendule*, and the brief twilight of a summer night had passed away, as I sat at the window awaiting his return, when I heard the sound of wheels,—he was come. I fancied he looked pale and harassed, but he declared it was only the fatigue consequent on his rapid travelling to reach home before nightfall. Dear Harry ! oh, he could not have lavished those caresses on me, and so affectionately reproached me for my pale face and weary eyes, if he were really changed to me ! And yet, when he was silent, I perceived the same cloud on his brow, and ill-suppressed anxiety as before,—oh, why will he not make the cause known to me ?

"August 9th.—A glowing summer's day,—not a cloud in the azure vault of the heavens,—not a ripple on the calm blue sea. We rode

some distance into the country, and found the scenery, if less striking, equally beautiful as that of the coast. In the evening, Harry read aloud from a new volume of poems, which have gained their author a splendid reputation, and revolutionized the French classic school of poetry in a few years. They are called 'Les Méditations.' Exquisitely beautiful in thought and language, I have seldom read lyrical poetry which I admired so much. It is said that these poems were the author's first production, and were written in early youth. And is there not a poetry which clings around our common childhood, a lingering halo of innocence and holiness from that better world from which we have so lately come? But a poet's awaking to life is a sensation infinitely more exquisite than that of his fellow beings, when he views the common things of the world through the golden light of his imagination, and the flowers of the garden, the woods, and the fields, appear like the Paradise of old! 'Always till the word comes, the thought lies a burden on the man,' says a gifted American,—and can there be a more glorious moment of his life than when the word does come at his invocation? Ah, 'tis worth toil and anguish and obloquy,—for is it not the watch-word of Fame,—the assurance of an earthly immortality?

"August 10th. — On the whole, I think Harry's spirits improved since his journey to town. This morning he sat by my side chatting with all his old charming gaiety. Could there be a more fascinating companion? I am too selfish, perhaps, in detaining him by my side. I forget that, from his past mode of life, he may require more change of scene than I do. I must lay aside these doubts and fears, that are only, perhaps, the offspring of my peculiar position, and cheerfully submit to his temporary absences.

"August 11th.—I did not think my resolution would have been called into exercise so soon. This morning Harry received an invitation to attend a ball at his cousin's, the Marchioness of Lochferry's, who is spending the season in town. I felt myself change colour as he announced his intention of going, in a hurried, almost embarrassed tone, for I could not help remembering that during the first month of our residence here he had declined two invitations from the same quarter. My spirits were painfully depressed throughout the morning, and he, on his part, scarcely alluded to the object of his journey, as he gave the necessary orders to his servants, and embraced me at parting.

"Evening.—A long and solitary day, with my thoughts elsewhere. The twilight deepens. How

plainly does it rise before me,—that bright and cheerful scene! The song, and the dance, and the gay *badinage* of its votaries; young men and matrons, and fair girls——Ah! who among them can know that his word, and his faith, aye, his heart, are mine? I will—I must believe it! It cannot be otherwise.”

CHAPTER IV.

— Club, August 20th.

“ DEAR HARRY,

“ After expecting you so long to return to the haunts of the living, that I began to imagine your name had been unaccountably omitted in the list of the illustrious dead, I am going to bore you with a series of questions as to the nature of your present pursuits in that ‘ highly-interesting locality,’ as the guide-books say, to which you so wilfully betook yourself in the midst of a London season. First, let me premise that you are not compelled to answer them, unless convenient; though touching my discretion, ‘ Master Hal,’ I have given you sundry proofs of it lately, the merits of which have been most unjustifiably overlooked. Are you yachting, travelling, or only rustivating? What are the ‘ natives’ like; and (remember, I’m

a susceptible fellow,) are there any pretty girls among them? Things here are going that lively pace, which they generally do at the end of the session; honourable members bagging their grouse, or bragging of Parliamentary prowess to their constituents, and even our shopkeepers' wives are inhaling saline breezes at Brighton or Boulogne. But now to the object of my letter. Crofton has won his bet, which has been pending so long, and gives us a champagne supper at his club in consequence. It is on Tuesday, the 22nd, so come up to town and join us. Crofton wanted to write himself, but I undertook the task of drawing you out of that hermit's retreat of your's at St. Mary's. Do come, my dear fellow; we are positively inconsolable at your prolonged and mysterious absence. Everybody wants you—all your sins are forgiven, and even poor Augustus L——, whom you so cruelly distanced in the favour of a certain fair friend of our's, wonders what has become of you—he is just returned from the Continent, by-the-bye. Now, my dear Harry, you must come. I have special reasons for wanting to see you myself, and believe me,

“Faithfully your's,

“CHARLEY CONYERS.”

CHAPTER V.

“ August 12th.—HARRY returned at noon to-day. The ball, he said, had not concluded when he left, and the Marchioness had begged him to attend a fête to be given next week. I cannot tell why, but I felt so depressed upon hearing the intelligence, that I did not even ask if he intended going. At last I regained my self-possession sufficiently to ask several questions concerning his cousin, and listened with a smile, while my heart ached, to the reply. It appears the Marchioness is young and beautiful, and, as Harry openly affirmed, has married her husband (considered by every one her inferior) for the sake of his title and vast possessions. Are these marriages *de convenance* common in English society? I thought they were confined to foreigners alone. On the Continent they are wholly brought about

by the parents, and often when the betrothed are mere children ; but there is something revolting when a woman voluntarily sacrifices herself at the shrine of Mammon. How easy and commonplace, too, was the tone in which Harry acknowledged the fact ! Why did that tone grate upon my ear as it never did before ?

“ August 13th.—The effort I made yesterday has not been without its reward. Harry has been more himself since his return. A ray of happiness again illumines my path, and could I succeed in divesting my mind of all anxiety for the future, there would be little to disquiet me in the present. How fervently do I wish that my husband would no longer hesitate to make known his marriage to his father ! Alas ! he has even ceased to mention the subject.

“ August 14th.—It is strange too that Harry seldom talks now of his plans for the future. Whole days pass in the discussion of irrelevant topics, or the routine of our usual pursuits, without his once alluding to them. Is my husband, like myself, haunted with fears, and forebodings of the future ? Can this be the cause of his frequent fits of silence and melancholy ?

“ August 15th.—Another day ; a dull weary void. Harry absent, trying a new horse. Poor

Sultan is pronounced incurable; will he be discarded for a newer favourite?

“August 16th.—Harry has expressed a desire to return to town. Why did the announcement sound like the knell to my happiness? It was so unexpected that I can hardly recollect the way in which I replied to him. But surprise made me break through all reserve, and I entreated him before leaving our retirement to make known his marriage to his father and the rest of his friends. He rather evaded than denied my request, endeavoured to reconcile me to the change, and still declared it necessary to put off acquainting his father with his marriage till his return. After he had quitted the room, his reasoning appeared on reflection, so unsatisfactory to me, that I felt more depressed than I had done before. At this moment he is writing letters in the library—dare I hope that he has seen matters in a different light, and is imparting to his father the long-kept secret?

“August 17th.—I perceived from several things that happened yesterday, that Harry had decided on quitting the Island. But however I may regret the change, I will no longer oppose it. Three short months of retirement from the busy world, is not so long as to make him weary of this se-

questered, but beautiful spot; has he any other object in view in quitting it so soon?

“August 19th.—What is gone from our daily intercourse, and each familiar scene? We sail on the bay, and climb the cliffs at eventide to watch the sunset as usual; he talks, he caresses me, but I no longer feel the same confidence in him, or cherish the same hopes of the future which I was wont to do! There are no symptoms of Lord Deloraine’s return, or that my husband will accede to my wish of making known our marriage to him. Can I help doubting the reality of his love for me, under such circumstances? Is there more of passion than of constancy in it—more of selfish—no I cannot write that hideous word in conjunction with my Harry. I cannot believe him to be less true than all my woman’s love pictured him to be. I have wronged him—there is a cause possibly for his return to town, and his reluctance to write to his father. Why cannot I feel the same faith in him which I had before?

“August 21st.—The days of our sojourn here are numbered, and a letter which Harry received from a friend this morning, has confirmed him in his resolution of returning to town and leaving the island. Does my husband regret quitting it as much as I do?

“ August 22nd.—Chance guided our footsteps last evening along the same path over St. Mary’s Cliff, which we discovered upon our arrival here. Like then, too, the sun was gradually sinking below the horizon, while the surrounding landscape appeared bathed in the golden light of his beams. A profound sadness fell upon me; the glorious tints of earth and sky seemed arrayed only in mockery of one’s wretchedness. I grew wearied of the conversation; it lacked the fire which once glowed under its slightest words, and sounded hollow and unreal to my ear. We paused to rest, and Harry, perhaps perceiving my fatigue, began reading aloud from a pocket volume of ‘Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.’ At length he came to those lines that are always at some period of their lives the invocation of every poet’s heart, as they express the insufficiency of all human affections to make our happiness:—

‘ Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art,
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith, whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e’er shall see
The naked eye thy form as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled Heaven,
Even with its own desiring fantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquenched soul, parched, wearied, wrung, and
riven.

' Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation;—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized ?
In him alone. Can Nature show as fair ?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood, and pursue as men ?
The unreached Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again.

In spite of myself, I felt the cruel truth of the poet's lines. I recognized in them that implacable fate which so often pursues genius—the avenging Nemesis of mediocrity; to find their lofty souls solitary among their kind. Had Byron been successful in his early love, or happy in his subsequent married life, would he have wandered self-exiled among the remains of the Eternal City, to write, more imperishable than its ruins, the stanzas of 'Childe Harold,' or that truest satire on human nature, the witty, malicious verses of 'Don Juan?' It would seem as if the finest monuments of human genius must be based upon human suffering; and the flame, which will endure through all ages, be lighted in the ordeal of misfortune and calumny. Has the fate of women of genius been more fortunate? The sphere, or rather limit of a woman's duties has been so jealously defined, that, till the present day, the arduous task of overstepping its boun-

daries has been a thing rarely attempted. She stands in need of more sympathy and kindness from her fellow-creatures than her masculine competitors in the race for fame; yet how rarely does she obtain it? * * *

“ August 23rd.—Harry has fixed the day of our departure, and made every arrangement for the journey. He has received no tidings of his father; and a note from Lady Lochferry to apprise him that her fête is postponed till next week, was the only contents of the letter-bag. Why does my heart sink within me as the day of departure draws more near? A presentiment of evil weighs upon my mind, and paralyzes all my efforts to amuse him. Last evening he asked me to sing, but I could not; I felt a sudden choking in my throat; the words died inarticulate on my lips, and pleading a sudden indisposition as my excuse, I hurried away to give vent to my feelings in my own apartment. Without the sensitive anxiety he once displayed over my most trifling ailments, he is obviously uneasy; his countenance often wears a perplexed and anxious expression, and he will remain silent, absorbed in his own thoughts for hours together, while I can no longer conceal my unhappiness. Just heaven! is this the reward of my sacrifices and devotion to him?

“ August 25th.—My husband has made all the necessary arrangements for our arrival in town to-morrow. In spite of my resolve, not to annoy him by the display of any useless opposition to his will, the tears sprang to my eyes as he made the announcement without coupling with it the smallest indication of his plans for the future. He endeavoured to console me, declaring it was ultimately for the best; and reiterated all his former professions of love. Is he not aware that he would better testify it by acting in accordance with my wishes? And that even his father's pride or prejudices should not prevent him acknowledging our marriage in the sight of the world? There is—must be a reason for his reluctance and the change in his demeanour. Do I judge him too harshly? Oh, God! may time make it apparent, and clear away all doubt and misunderstanding between us! May he learn to trust me as before, and may we be united in that which is the only true marriage, mutual love and perfect confidence, again!

CHAPTER VI.

IT was a clear warm summer-night, on the day of his arrival in town, when Captain Thornton drove in his cab to the club, which was the scene of the appointed festivity. As he reached Trafalgar Square, a throng of carriages for the moment impeded his progress; and checking his horse with some difficulty, to allow the nearest to pass, he recognized the inmates with no little surprise. Had it been possible he would have passed on without further notice, but the greeting of Sir John Marsden already sounded in his ear, and he felt constrained to stop, and enquire after his absent daughter. Another moment, and he was once more on his way, while the answer still echoed in his ear that she was in town; and he mentally thanked fortune who had spared him,

under present circumstances, a somewhat embarrassing meeting.

"Crofton, my dear boy," exclaimed Mr. Doyle as they sat down to an exquisite repast in the splendidly furnished *salle-à-manger* of the club, "you've performed your promise to ten confiding fellow-creatures to the letter; Soyer was never more felicitous in his combinations—a sprinkling of novelty—"

"Novelty," interrupted an elderly *bon-vivant*, "should be sparingly introduced; curiosity's too exciting an emotion to harmonize with the gentle action of the digestive powers."

"Commend me to a well cooked supper, at the witching hour of midnight," exclaimed Mr. Doyle, filling his champagne glass; "one fears no interruption; and while the very cabman in the street lights his pipe, why should not we, the porcelain to plebeian delf, discuss our champagne and cigars?"

"Exactly so," said a young guardsman, approvingly; "one is not tantalized as at a dinner-party, with expecting a summons to coffee and the women—"

"The sex, my dear boy," said the elderly *bon-vivant*, pausing sententiously, "are decidedly *de trop* sometimes; one does not want them always—"

"Recollect the credit of the British army, gentlemen," interrupted Harry, laughing, "and pray revoke those ungallant observations."

"By Jove," drawled the Honourable Frederick Fitzakerley, endeavouring to twirl his moustache with the air of a veritable Don Cæsar de Bazan, "I couldn't pawsibly think a pretty woman *de trop* anywhere!"

"What a profound discovery," exclaimed Mr. Crofton: "my dear Fred, you are really one of the lights of the age—"

"Of course, aw—" replied the honourable youth, languidly taking a cigar from his mouth, with an air at once of intelligence and candour, "I'm up to a thing or two—"

"Now, Fitz, do arrest that flood of eloquence," interrupted Mr. Doyle, laughing, "don't unlock your mental treasures too rashly: 'pearls before swine,' you know—and pray pass the claret this way."

"So Lord Deloraine is still in Paris?" enquired Mr. Crofton, of our hero.

"A distressing case of paternal desertion," exclaimed Conyers, with a sly glance at his friend; "imagine a young man, left like Ariadne of old, on the sea-girt shore, and driven to invoke the 'spirits of the vasty deep,' or a 'mermaid from her coral caves' to share his solitude. By

Jove, Harry, you've not yet unfolded the mysteries of your sojourn there, at all to my satisfaction."

"I vote, old fellow, you fortify yourself with another tumbler of champagne, and tell us all about it," said Mr. Doyle.

But our hero was proof against the railleries and half-implied suspicions of his companions; and it was little past midnight, when he quitted the party, whose orgies had evidently not reached their completion, and returned home.

A dull sense of weariness oppressed his faculties when he awoke the following morning, and endeavoured to comprehend something said by his servant, who had just entered the room. "A letter, sir, marked immediate," repeated the man: "I thought it might be of consequence."

His master hastily opened it—saw his father's hand-writing, and read as follows:—

Dover, August 25th.

"DEAR HARRY,

"I have returned unexpectedly, as you will see from the date of this letter, but the departure of my friends from Paris makes the place now confoundedly dull for me: nothing is going on; and even the departure of my respected friend, the bereaved Bishop of Donoughmore for his native bogs, has not provoked a single bon-mot

worth recording. What an ungrateful dog you are, by the way, that you never dutifully tendered your thanks for that interesting episode on married life; the whole epistle was highly entertaining, and the moral, which I always extract for the edification of the young—unexceptionable. Have you heard the whereabouts of our priceless (excuse the pun) friend, Sir John Marsden? what are you doing in that quarter, my dear boy? If you really persist in these delays, that poor girl will be obliged to endow another husband with her thousands, in self-defence. Affairs are becoming critical with us; my Dublin agent has not yet remitted me any part of the Deloraine rental, and creditors are clamorous. I really can't imagine that a son of mine would make so preposterous a choice, as to prefer genteel pauperism (possibly enlivened by a short sojourn in the Queen's Bench, for I shrewdly suspect your debts can't be much less than my own) to a comfortable income of some thirty thousand per annum, to keep the ball going. A mistake, truly said a French politician, is worse than a crime. My dear Harry, there is but one fault, one crime, which the world never forgives, and that is—poverty. Beg the favour of a loan from your dearest friend, and how miraculously soon has all the friendship he professed yesterday been forgotten! Let the faintest rumour reach

Pall Mall, that you pay a trifle of interest to the Jews, and lo! your acquaintance are as blind to your approach as if afflicted with ophthalmia, while the Carlton or the Reform knows you not! The world likes your comfortable sinner in 'purple and fine linen,' better than a saint with his coat out at elbows. Will you give note of my arrival to the establishment in St. James' Square, and meet me there to-morrow?

"In haste,

"Very truly yours,

"DELORAINÉ."

For some minutes, Harry Thornton felt stupefied at this sudden intelligence of his father's return. The moment was come, when he must acknowledge his marriage; was he prepared to face the consequences that might ensue? How hard to sacrifice, even for Ellen, every habit and favourite taste, he had hitherto only lived to gratify? And then passed slowly before his mind all his late expensive follies—horses, yachts, bills, and usurers; for his lavish expenditure at his new residence had compelled him to borrow on terms which only made future ruin more inevitable, if Lord Deloraine did not possess the will, or the ability to assist him. What was to be done? To encounter his father's anger was immediate ruin;

on the other hand, by a little tact in making the inevitable disclosure at a favourable moment, he might yet hope that his father would forgive the past, and if he could not give pecuniary aid, exert his interest to secure some post under government for him. "Yes," thought our hero, "pride will not let him altogether abandon a Delorainé !"

And after the foregoing peep behind the scenes, the reader will need no further enlightenment as to the cause of the occasional abruptness and despondency displayed by our fickle-minded hero.

CHAPTER VII.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“AUGUST 28th.—Thank God, the effort I made in so reluctantly quitting our sea-side solitude has not been without its reward. My husband seems less thoughtful and abstracted; and excepting the lonely hours which I pass in his absence at the club, the change has hitherto not been productive of any evil results to me.

“It is certain that he has omitted no comfort or luxury which would tend to reconcile me to my change of abode. The windows of our apartments look on Hyde Park; my boudoir, beautifully fitted up, opens into another large and elegant apartment, and the bath, dressing-rooms, indeed the whole suite, are perfect in their appliances. Alas! that one thing alone should be

wanting to make it a paradise to me ! Still this painful suspense about the future—can he imagine the anxiety which it causes me ?

“ August 29th.—We drove round the park in the afternoon, and the dusty foliage and sunburnt turf unfavourably contrasted with the beautiful scenery, rich in all the native luxuriance of nature, which we had so lately quitted.

“ September 1st.—To-day Harry has received the long-expected tidings of his father's return ; in a few hours Lord Deloraine will be in London. Must I grieve or rejoice ? Who can tell the result ? On the point of expressing my pleasure at the realization of my long-deferred expectations, I was suddenly checked by the sight of my husband's countenance, which was full of care and perplexity. Suspicion suddenly flashed across my mind ; I could no longer restrain my emotion, and exclaimed, ‘ Harry, what is this,—what is this mystery that constantly preys upon your mind and spirits ? is it the fear of your father's anger, or the existence of some other obstacle to our happiness ? ’ He declared my fears were groundless, and that nothing should prevent his acknowledging our marriage if I would only wait some short time longer ; and that only the necessity of consulting his father's prejudices made him cautious how he timed the information. That Lord Delo-

raïne had formed ambitious views for him; and ignorant of the rapid growth of our attachment, a precipitate avowal might ruin all his prospects. Four months had not elapsed yet since our union—surely I knew him better than to suppose love and devotion like his could have suffered diminution in that time? I could not picture the happiness of that evening, as we sat in the summer twilight—happy in ourselves—oh, happier in each other! I would not care to add how we sat far into the night, while the quiet stars shone unnoticed through the casement upon our happiness, and I promised to doubt, distrust no more, but leave my fate to him!

“Are we not happy—reconciled, and is not that enough? * * * * *

“September 2nd.—Lord Deloraine is arrived, and Harry is gone to meet him in St. James’s Square.

“3rd.—Harry is absent at his club to-day, from which he intended going to Deloraine House. For the first time I am haunted with a painful curiosity to behold the father of my husband; I feel a restless desire to study the character of a person on whom depend his son’s future prosperity and my happiness. He is said to be proud, despotic, yet clever and witty—above all, he is fond of his son: who could be otherwise? It is

on that I must build my hopes and their accomplishment. And Harry's reasoning is undoubtedly true—he cannot at once broach a subject to him so much at variance with all his opinions and prejudices. But a truce to my conjectures. I hear the sound of his cab, he is returning.

September 4th.—Last night I suffered a cruel disappointment. Harry returned earlier than I expected; I flew to meet him, and with more animation than has been usual with me of late, expressed my pleasure at his return. But his manner was so cold and abrupt, that I pressed to know the cause of his annoyance. Imagine my surprise, when all that my enquiries could elicit was, that he had been persuaded to accompany his father to a dinner-party, and regretted going! Throughout the evening he remained the same—gloomy and reserved. Alas! why do I seek to conceal the truth from myself? My husband is altered—changed even to me! The same invisible, yet impassable barrier is again between us: he is often silent and gloomy, yet never gives the smallest hint as to the cause of his depression and altered demeanour.

“September 5th.—It is in vain that studiously concealing my own fears and anxieties, I sing, play, and unweariedly exert myself to amuse him; the cloud still remains on his brow, and a kind of

restraint in his manner, as if he even shrank from the idea of making me the confidante of his feelings. What can be the cause of such a change it is vain to conjecture; but I observe that the perusal of his letters, or a visit to Deloraine House, are often the precursors of these fits of gloom and abstraction.

September 6th.—He now goes frequently to the club, and remains absent for hours together. After his return at a late hour last night, I was astonished to hear him say that he thought it likely he should dispose of his stud soon; but when I expressed my surprise at his intention, he abruptly rose and opened the piano, as if to put an end to the conversation, without answering my questions, or giving a single reason for his remark.

“September 8th.—A week has now elapsed since Lord Deloraine’s return, yet nothing has transpired to give me consolation or hope. During the last few days, my husband has avoided all mention of the subject nearest my heart, and absents himself from home even more than he has done before. Ah, why do I still hesitate to tear aside the thin veil of self-deception which blinds me to the truth? My husband has ceased to love me—indifference has usurped the place of affection—and he rather shuns than seeks my society.

Yes—the once gay, graceful young man, has become a morose and altered being; his temper irritated at the merest trifles, and often abrupt and unkind to me without the slightest cause.

“September 9th.—Alas! a thousand traits of our every-day life confirm my previous assertion; and I cannot help observing that his frequent displays of harshness to his servants are only another proof of the change in his temper and disposition.

“September 10th.—A strange thing happened yesterday. About four o'clock I was going into the dining-room, the door of which was ajar, when I drew back, surprised at the sight of a stranger sitting at the table, on which were placed writing materials, along with my husband. But the glimpse, brief as it was, convinced me he was not one of my husband's friends or brother officers; for the stranger was a short, sallow man, with strongly marked features, and slovenly and dirty in his appearance. Shortly afterwards Harry came into my dressing-room, but he never mentioned the stranger's visit, or what brought him there. Now, who could this person be? and why was his visit so studiously concealed from me? Instead of one mystery, there are many; oh, why will not my Harry fearlessly confide his cares and

troubles to me? Is there any sacrifice which I would not make for his sake?

“September 11th.—Harry is gone to the Marchioness of Lochferry’s this evening. It is only since my residence here, unfortunately, that I see the position in which the secrecy of our marriage has placed me. A wife, yet not acknowledged as such—the partner of his joys and sorrows, whom fate forbids to share in them! While he quits Tattersall’s or his club for brilliant saloons or gay society, I must sit alone to count the weary hours for his tardy return! I may breathe to none my secret sorrows, and must endure in silence a position alike distressing and disgraceful to me! Has it indeed come to this?

“September 12th.—I now rarely go out, and my husband seldom asks me to ride or drive with him; yet my pale features too plainly show the effects of confinement and anxiety on my constitution.

“September 13th.—I am unusually depressed this morning; my temples throb, my limbs feel powerless; in a word, I am ill in body as in mind from continued suspense and anxiety. I have neither written nor slept since my conversation with Harry last night, for the subject has absorbed my whole thoughts since. He had been sitting silent and abstracted by my side, when taking my

hand, he told me that his father wished him to go out with him for a few days, and that much as he regretted it, he could not disobey without displeasing him. At first I felt stupified at the announcement. It was not his absence, at his request I could have borne that without a murmur; but what am I to think of these continued delays and equivocations?

“I felt too bitterly pained at the indifference with which he announced his departure, the few brief words of regret which courtesy seemed to extort from him rather than affection—why is he so altered? It is as evident in the merest trifles, as in his conduct to me—capricious, uncertain, and irritable; his very servants scarce know how to please their altered master! But I will not weary him with the sight of my grief; I will be calm and composed during the few days which now intervene between me and his departure; then—then—when the restraint which I prefer even to freedom, removed—but I will not anticipate.

“September 14th.—He is absent to-day on one of those long and mysterious visits to the city. What a mystery now shrouds his slightest movements! In despair of ever regaining his confidence, I cease to make the slightest enquiry concerning them. Yesterday I passed two men

in the hall; and while in one I recognised Harry's former strange and sinister-looking companion, the other appeared, if possible, still more suspicious in his appearance. What brings such men under my husband's roof? Could it be anything connected with them or his visits to the city, which made him so suddenly determine to leave St. Mary's and return to London? But these things matter not, it is the division and estrangement ever-widening between us, which is the cause of such bitter grief to me. Good God! can it be possible that the union, at first blessed with such mutual affection, should prove only productive of misery?

"September 15th.—I asked this morning the place of his destination, and where I should address my letters. 'He did not think it necessary I should write, the time of his absence would be short.' Alas! the truth is too evident—he has ceased indeed to love me; I am not the Ellen Maynard of former days to him, but perhaps the obstacle to his future prosperity! Even my voice fails to charm him; he will be silent and gloomy in my society, and if I interrupt his reverie, will reply in tones so harsh and unlike himself, that I am only too willing to seek a refuge in silence from his unkindness. Can this moody, irritable

man be the same being who was all joy, all tenderness when I married him?

“September 16th.—He is gone—I performed my self-imposed task to the last. I was composed, almost cheerful, and my voice only faltered in a last farewell, when I entreated him to return soon. Gone! as I write the word in my solitude, it suggests a thousand nameless fears and suspicions to my desponding mind. But no: unkind, devoid of feeling as he may appear, Harry can never inflict another pang on my heart—he must be changed, indeed, ere I could think that of him!

“September 17th.—It is now many days since I have been out; I feel ill alike in body and in mind from suspense and anxiety; but I must bear up against these depressing influences, and struggle against my fate. I will occupy myself,—no matter in what—so that I may find a refuge in employment from my desponding thoughts.

“September 18th.—Harry has not written since his departure. Why do I feel astonished at this new proof of his indifference to me?

“September 19th.—An unexpected meeting. Roused by illness to the necessity of consulting my health, I walked in Kensington Gardens yes-

terday. The day was fine; and choosing the most sequestered walk I could find, I had paced it for some time wrapped in my own sad reflections, when the sound of a familiar voice suddenly struck upon my ear. No one was visible; and I was beginning to fancy myself mistaken, when two persons appeared issuing from a side-alley, and I found myself confronted with Madame Leclercq and her friend Mrs. Montagu. It was impossible to avoid the unwelcome meeting; but greatly to my surprise she spoke with undiminished cordiality, and at parting even expressed a desire to renew our friendship. Strange, too, that at this second meeting I felt precisely the same repugnance to her as I did at our first, a year ago! The same shrinking back without cause or reason, yet her accents were as smooth, her words as bland as ever! Why, despite the kindness she has shown to me, do I always distrust this woman?

“September 20th.—No letter. The whole day passed in a melancholy reverie.

“September 21st.—Madame Leclercq called to-day in accordance with her promise. She remained some time, so kind and sympathizing in her manner, that I gradually forgot all my former misgivings; and finally confided to her the history

of my secret marriage. She did not express any surprise at my narration, probably from the fact that she was in some sort prepared for it by the letter which I wrote before leaving her house; and I felt so utterly wretched from the events of the past month, that even the silence in which she listened was gratifying to me. Alas! one must have wept in solitude without a friend to comprehend the value of sympathy! On her part she promised to keep my secret, and asked me to pay her a visit should my husband's absence be prolonged.

“A week has elapsed since his departure, yet I have had no letter from him, and he left me even in ignorance of the place of his destination. That it was the country-seat of a friend in Surrey was all I could gather. How different from the lover of former days who was never weary of dilating on the happiness which was in store for us! There are moments when I cannot convince myself that the change in his manner is owing to his indifference to me alone. I think, then, that some misfortune has befallen him, which has made his demeanour gloomy, and his temper irritable. But if I am right in my conjecture, oh, why will he not confide it to me? Why does he not fearlessly throw himself on my

sympathy, instead of almost alienating my affections by his coldness and reserve? Can he do me the injustice of believing that I am vain and heartless, and incapable of consoling him in his sorrows?

“September 22nd.—Again no letter. What am I to conclude from his lengthened absence, and still stranger silence? But one thought is ever present to my mind—that he is become selfish and indifferent; he is absorbed in his own cares or pleasures, and has ceased to love me. Love with him was only the sensual passion which expires with its gratification—is he then any longer worthy of mine? Alas! there is but one answer a woman’s heart can return to such a question.

‘Man’s love is of his life, a thing apart,
 ’Tis woman’s whole existence; man may range
 The court, camp, church, the vessel and the mart;
 Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange
 Pride, fame, ambition to fill up his heart,
 And few there are whom these cannot estrange;
 Men have all these resources; we but one,
 To love again, and be again undone!

* * * * *

“September 23rd.—At last my solitude has ended. A few hurried lines received this morn-

together; and while one, apparently the architect, held a plan of large proportions in his hand, the second appeared to submit his opinions with an air of deference to the other remaining person of the group, whose feature wore a half amused, half *ennuyée* expression, as he oracularly pronounced his decisions. But leaving Sir John Marsden and Lord Delorainé, we will join Captain Thornton and his fair companion, who are promenading the somewhat formal alleys of the flower-garden beyond.

“You will be charmed with your new residence, Miss Marsden, when these improvements are completed; the new façade will quite ennoble the whole building.”

“There is only one objection I can make to it,—it is the tame and uninteresting character of the surrounding scenery. But an old friend of papa’s having purchased an estate in the neighbourhood, made him give Surrey the preference. For myself, I should have preferred some more retired and romantic spot, farther from town—on the borders of some Cumberland lake, for instance.”

“But young ladies seldom reside in the paternal mansion all their lives,” said Captain Thornton, playfully; “a gay breakfast will usher in some

happy morning, when I shall hear that Miss Marsden, with some favoured suitor, has deserted Surrey for a new abode."

The young lady blushed, and looked down on the ground; but there was a slight tone of pique in her voice, which struck the ear of her companion, as she replied, gravely, "No, Captain Thornton, I can give a decided denial to your supposition, whether as regards the present or the future. But hark! there is the luncheon-bell; had we not better return to the house?"

Three days had come and gone since the above conversation, but neither Lord Deloraine nor his son had yet quitted the mansion of the hospitable ex-merchant. The dinner-hour of the fourth was approaching, when Lord Deloraine, who was waiting the arrival of the evening post before descending from his dressing-room, impatiently rang the bell. Two things had combined to disturb his lordship's equanimity on this eventful evening. The expected remittance had not yet reached him from his Dublin agent, nor did it appear that his son was disposed to follow the paternal advice, and propose to the daughter of their wealthy host. In their last conversation, indeed, on the subject, he had declared that there existed an obstacle which set the project entirely aside; and which he would mention when his lordship was more

the arms of his son or his friend for consolation. Reading the concluding sentence again, "The devil!" ejaculated his pious lordship aloud, and looked for some minutes peculiarly blank at the aforesaid paragraph.

By the way, why do people, when a domestic catastrophe occurs, their wives or their daughters run off, or what is generally voted worse, the sheriff's myrmidons make their way in, why do people, we repeat, invariably call on his Satanic Majesty to help them out of their troubles? The most saintly and sanctified we've observed, in private mutter "the deuce," and in public talk of the "chastisements of Providence." For our part, in the guileless ignorance which befits our sex, we imagine there is a secret belief in the bosoms of mankind that the devil will come to their aid, or surely sensible men would never waste their breath in the invocation.

That short but significant phrase ended, Lord Deloraine rose; carefully locked the obnoxious epistle in his desk, then glanced in the mirror, and wiped away with his cambric pocket-handkerchief a few drops of perspiration that in the momentary agitation had started to his brow, and calmly descended to dinner. "Punctual as usual, I see," said his lordship, looking at his watch with a smile; "only two minutes to seven; posi-

tively, my dear madam, I feel quite a family-man again in your well-regulated *ménage*."

"Lord Deloraine, allow me the honour," said the bald East India director who lived in the vicinity—"Sauterne or Madeira?"

"Annie, my dear, have you any wine?" asked her father.

"The devil!" once more mentally ejaculated Captain Thornton's less affectionate parent. "What a stupid boy that is of mine; he will never make love to the girl unless this piece of news frightens him into it!"

The dinner might have seemed more tedious than usual to Lord Deloraine, but, like all other sublunary things, it came to an end; and his lordship merely remarked, as their host left the dinner-table, "that he should carry off an unwilling truant, but must request Harry to accompany him to his own apartments."

"What has happened?" asked Harry, somewhat uneasy to learn the object of this special interview. His father closed the door, then handing him the letter, remarked, "that he must now see for himself that only a marriage with a wealthy heiress like Miss Marsden could prevent the consequences that must otherwise ensue from Macgregor's flight."

"It is impossible, my dear sir," said the young man hastily; "recent events——"

Lord Delorainé did not appear to have heard the interruption, but impassively continued—

"All this happened nearly three weeks ago, —by this time the fellow will have reached the States; and detection, always uncertain, is in this instance, useless, as if the large sum which he carried off with him were recovered, it would only be sunk in the debts of the estate, without benefiting us."

Again Harry essayed to interrupt him, but without success.

"Within a few days," continued his father, "the facts will be publicly known; and I leave it to your better judgment to decide whether for your own sake, as the future possessor of Castle-Delorainé, you should not take the only means of saving yourself from ruin——"

"But I cannot do as you advise me," exclaimed the young man, in a tone of distraction, as his mind shrank from the prospect of poverty, and pecuniary difficulties called up by his father's words, and which he already had a foretaste of. "I am bound by other ties, and the past is irrevocable——"

"Probably not binding—a vow of bachelor-

hood to some favourite ballet-dancer—come, sir, this is trifling,” interrupted Lord Deloraine, sternly—“what are they?”

“Father, I am married!” exclaimed the young man, pacing the room in a tumult of conflicting emotions it would be in vain to describe; “and the blow, which has come so suddenly must fall upon us, without an effort to avert it. I am married—no longer a free agent; and already, I confess, in debt and difficulty, have relied upon your influence, if not your purse, to extricate me from them—Will you see her, sir? she has, alas! neither estates nor fortune, but she is a beautiful woman, and devotedly attached to me—I loved her at our first meeting—I do so still,” hastily added Harry, as he caught the keen eyes of his father fixed on his countenance; “and could I gain some appointment abroad, which would enable me to leave London, and my present associates; in short,” said or rather stammered our hero in his agitation, “if I were extricated from these temporary difficulties, and could obtain a sufficient income for our wants, we might be happy and prosperous.”

“’Tis a pity, sir,” ironically remarked the peer, “that the want of these trifling additions to your felicity did not strike you beforehand.”

There was a brief pause; but though Lord Delorainé was too able a tactician to betray what was passing within, a certain fire in his usually cold grey eye betrayed to Harry his father's anger.

"And who is the person, sir," he asked at length, with a cold and dignified air, "that you have selected to be the future Lady Delorainé, and to enter a family so ancient and honoured as ours?"

"One whose birth will not disgrace it, sir," answered the young man, warmly; "whom I ought long since to have made known to you. She is the daughter of a French *émigré*, the Count de Verdun;" and Harry in a few words related his wife's history, already known to the reader.

"The daughter of a French *émigré*," repeated his father; "possibly of a French shoemaker, since we have no means of knowing."

Harry Thornton crimsoned.

"Well—we'll suppose the former: what do you intend to do with the future Lady Delorainé? Is she to live in barracks, or would it not be more prudent of you to sell your stud and commission, and take some cheap lodgings for your future abode? As she has no fortune,

and yours is spent, you must live cheap, and when half a dozen little brats are running about you, the Honourable Mrs. Thornton or yourself must tie on the darling's pinafores, and scrub their dirty faces for them—but that's 'domestic bliss,' you know, of course. My dear boy!" and his lordship suddenly smiled, and spoke with a look and accent of pitying good-nature that was perfect torture to his sensitive son; "what a fool you've contrived to make of yourself!"

And a vision of his future prospects, that was anything but promising, passed before our hero's mind. What could he do to escape from his debts and embarrassments? He had expected that the first moment of his father's disappointment at the frustration of his favourite scheme passed away, he would exert his interest to procure him some post abroad with a position in society not inferior to his present one. It was impossible to live in England on such a beggarly pittance as his half-pay! Tolerate lodgings in a suburb, with green shutters, and a maid-of-all-work,—faugh! the idea was disgusting! What *could* he do to pay his debts, or gain an income suitable to his wants and expenditure?

"By the way, has your wife been on the stage, did you say?" asked his father.

"Never, nor was she intended for it,—it was her mother who was an actress,—but she has a splendid voice, and great talent."

"Really, humph, it might be useful," observed the peer, in a tone of sarcastic indifference.

His son was silent, divided between his fears of poverty, and a feeling of indignation at his father's sarcasms, which a vision of Ellen singing in a concert-room for daily bread, did not tend to dissipate.

"And as you have been married, you say, more than four months, why was I not informed of it sooner?" said Lord Deloraine.

"I first delayed breaking it to you until your return from abroad, and latterly——" Harry hesitated a moment, then added, "I waited in the hope that our affairs would take some favourable turn, which would remove my difficulties and soften your displeasure."

"Well, sir, you see the result, and the life-long poverty and embarrassment to which you have condemned yourself. Now I am informed of the happy event, I presume you will introduce the young lady as your wife to your friends without further delay."

"You forget, sir, that I must make her such in the eyes of the world before doing so." (The

peer suddenly started, and a peculiar glance shot from his keen, grey eye, but he said nothing.) "It is true," resumed his son, "that after our elopement, we were legally, though secretly married, according to the rites of the Romish Church, of which Ellen is a member; but both my wife and myself hoped that you would give the sanction of your presence when the ceremony was publicly performed by a clergyman of our Church of England." What made Harry Thornton suddenly stop, as his father interrupted him by rising from his seat and whispering three words in his ear? It might have been a fiend at his elbow from the effect they took upon him; the young man sprang so suddenly from his seat, while his agitated countenance expressed the utmost astonishment. Yet only three brief words of his astute and wily parent had sufficed to produce the effect.

"No, sir!" said, or rather stammered Harry Thornton in his agitation. "Honour binds me if the law does not. Never will I desert a woman who loves me, however distasteful narrow means and privations may be to my habits and inclinations——"

"And to her's," interrupted the tempter.

"Nay, sir, she married me without a thought of my wealth——"

"Say rather in ignorance of your poverty," sarcastically interrupted the peer.

"Without consulting even the friend under whose roof she was residing, Ellen Maynard fearlessly pledged her faith to me——"

"As the future Lord Delorainé," again interrupted his implacable parent.

"She renounced, for my sake, all her hopes of fame ; she gave up the study of her idolized art, and did not even ask my permission to pursue it."

"Of course not, do peeresses expectant ever go on the stage, or their husbands send them there ? No doubt, she was only too glad to give it up, and gratify her ambition by marrying a man of your rank and connections."

"Father,—believe it or not,—Ellen truly loves me."

"'Pon my soul, my dear boy, she would be very ungrateful if she did not. Let me see, somewhere about five thousand pounds spent in a few months, horses, equipages, sea-side villas, with satins and jewellery *ad libitum*,—the fair Ellen would be sadly wanting in taste and discretion if she failed to make the most of so generous a lover !"

This was such a new view of the case, that Harry paused, despite he was firm in his own convictions.

"Did she ever refuse a gift, or check your extravagance?" inexorably asked the peer.

The young man was constrained to answer in the negative.

"I thought as much. How did she like, pray, quitting your new residence, when you were obliged to return to town, in consequence of the failure of that Jew discounteer in the city last month? Why a whisper even reached me, at the club, that you had been largely indebted to his liberality of late!"

"Ah, sir, do not jest on so grave a matter," said the young man, in a desponding tone. "Does it cost me nothing to confess that I have been even threatened with arrest since their failure? It was not in consequence of their advances to me, but I was imprudent enough to sign some bills without first receiving the money, and they did not hesitate to profit by my thoughtlessness."

"Love of course," replied the peer, "will feed and console you, whether in the Queen's Bench, or Portugal Street—whither you will go, a martyr to matrimony! Now sir, answer me one practical question, how are you to extricate yourself from these paltry embarrassments, when the news of the flight of our agent with half the Deloraine

rent-roll will destroy our credit and consummate our ruin?"

"I cannot tell, sir; I am overwhelmed by the coincidence of events so disastrous," replied the young man, who sat with his head bent down on his breast, the very image of perplexity and despair. "Honour leaves me no alternative," he resumed, in an agitated and hesitating manner, "but to abandon Castle-Delorraine to its fate, and myself to ruin. Since that failure of Levi's last month, I have been exposed to constant annoyance in my pecuniary affairs—and Ellen, indeed, has appeared of late, as uneasy as myself. Till I had made known my marriage to you, I could not acknowledge it in sight of the world, or even take her with me in public. It has been harassing—perplexing in the extreme."

"No doubt of it," said his father.

"What would you have me do, sir?" ejaculated his son in an accent of despair. "Were I even enabled to provide for her future welfare, I could not break my word—desert a woman who believes herself married to me!"

"Certainly not," replied the implacable peer, in the same smooth, ironical tone; "it's a pity the regulations are so strict that your wife cannot accompany you in your transit to the Queen's

Bench instead ; so romantic a couple should never be separated !”

It was certainly a very disagreeable alternative to offer a young man. Perhaps he was literally chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies, as he sat for nearly an hour, silent and gloomy, while his lordship comfortably reclined opposite in a large crimson *bergère*, and while apparently shading his face from the glow of the fire, was in reality watching the changes in his son’s countenance. Those changes, how legibly they were written there ! How valuable now appeared the things in his sight, to which he had been accustomed all his life, yet now must give up for ever ! It *was* hard, *must* he do it ?

Reader, don’t be too severe on our hero, or cut his acquaintance for a first offence. Haven’t we all our failings ? Didn’t you (I’m addressing that good-looking young man, who has had an attack of the tender passion, and whose eye is lazily skimming over these pages), didn’t you, I say, outrun the governor’s allowance at Oxford, and break your vows when you proposed for the first time to your sister’s governess, ten years older than yourself, and who was such an example of constancy in her attachment to you ?

Well, Harry’s tongue was silent, but his mind was busy. Outside that comfortable room, beyond

its crimson draperies lit up by the glowing fire, he seemed to see only rapacious creditors, and life-long discomfort and embarrassment, shared by a wife, perhaps as little able to bear reverses as himself; and it might be, reproaching him for the misery which he had brought upon both.

“No, he couldn’t endure it, or Ellen either (self was uppermost, disguised under the plausible seeming of consideration for others), she would be as miserable as himself under such altered circumstances, and repent matrimony as heartily as he did; was there not a way still open to avoid privations, and difficulties, the ignominy of falling from his place in society, to become a penniless man?

He did not speak his thoughts, but his father did, so exactly did his words correspond with them.

“No, you’re not legally married, my dear boy,” said the worthy peer, rising from his seat, and slapping him on the shoulder, as if to rouse him from his reverie. “No, you’re not *bond-fide* married, merely a juvenile scrape—such things will happen in the best regulated families, &c., &c. Make a wiser choice next time, and we’ll provide for the fair Ellen somehow. By Jove, when I was your age, the women eloped with me, without my asking them; but I didn’t reward

them with my hand as well as my heart you understand," added the worthy nobleman, with a significant look, as he quitted the room; "that could only be given once, and to those whose birth entitled them to a coronet."

The door was closed, and Lord Deloraine gone, for his lordship had too much tact to wait for any revulsion of feeling which would cause a change in the fickle mind of his son. Captain Thornton returned to the drawing-room, bade good-night to the circle, and retired to bed, but not to rest.

Some devil in human shape appeared to haunt his restless couch, and incessantly whisper in his ear—"No, he was not married in the eyes of the law—past imprudence was not irrevocable—he was free to choose, free to exchange embarrassment and annoyance, and disgrace in the eyes of his associates, for wealth, pleasure, plenty, and prosperity!"

seized every opportunity to avoid questions which pride forbade him to answer, and reproaches which he felt he deserved. His selfishness increased as his mind recoiled in disgust from his prospects, and when a way of escape was suddenly opened to him in the very crisis of temptation, and he was persuaded to supplant Ellen by a young and amiable girl, whose ample fortune could a thousandfold replace all he was so reluctantly about to relinquish,—the result will no longer surprise the reader.

It had been with no *arrière pensée* that the marriage ceremony was only performed by a Romish priest, for he was then honest in his resolution to go through the rite according to the Anglican Church, with the presence and approval of his father, and never suspected that the performance of both was essential to the legal validity of the marriage, until he heard it from the insidious lips of Lord Deloraine. But the effect of such tidings in the present crisis, when his whole soul recoiled in disgust from the sacrifices it demanded of him, was great indeed; and the temptation far too powerful for his vacillating nature to resist.

Accurately, it must be confessed, did Lord Deloraine estimate the resistance which his son would oppose to his schemes, and no less skilful

the tactics by which he gained his point. Though astonished at the news of his secret marriage, Lord Deloraine was not unprepared for the tidings of his pecuniary difficulties. Rumours of Harry's dealings with the usurers soon reached his ears, and he foresaw that such a circumstance would compel him to fall in with his own schemes for personal profit and family aggrandizement.

Harrassed and weary, Harry Thornton descended to the breakfast-room after a sleepless night, somewhat surprised to find that his father did not intimate his wishes to him respecting their departure, which had been fixed to take place that morning. On the contrary, as their host was pressing his visitors to prolong their stay, his lordship glanced across the table, and expressed his regrets that "his son's engagements would oblige them to return to town." It was the first hint of departure.

"So soon!" exclaimed Annie Marsden, suddenly changing colour, and seconding her father's persuasions in a hurried manner. For the first time, as Captain Thornton glanced at the fair speaker, he thought there was truth in Conyers' words; thought too of coming annoyances, of tears and reproaches awaiting him at home (for conscience whispered they were deserved), and consented to remain.

visions, that he actually failed to detect a single fault in the preparation of the repast ; and even the bald and solemn East India director waxed cheerful under the genial influence of his *bon-mots*.

Our hero was the first to quit the dining-room, but on entering the saloon he found it deserted, and passed on to where Miss Marsden was tending her flowers in the adjoining conservatory.

"Can it be Captain Thornton," observed the young lady in some surprise, "who has deserted papa so soon?"

"I must answer the question in Irish fashion by another," he replied in a playful tone. "Is it wonderful I should leave papa when there is a far greater attraction for me elsewhere?"

The answer was not much more than a commonplace gallantry, elicited, too, by her own remark ; but his fair listener was silent, and did not reply. And Captain Thornton was once more mentally reviewing his own necessities and his father's counsels, when the voice of Miss Marsden recalled his wandering thoughts.

"Mamma has thought of a fresh commission for you, Captain Thornton ; she wants the aid of your judgment to procure her a phaeton, when you return to town ; for I quite agree with you

in thinking her present equipage too small for her purpose."

There was much in this casual speech at the moment to Harry's ear. There was the yielding deference to his taste and opinions which he had not always found in Ellen's stronger intellect, and there were the things recalled to his mind, horses, equipages, and the luxurious superfluities of life, which he must either gain or lose, according to his decision.

"I will go to Long Acre, and procure one to-morrow," replied he, forgetting in the pre-occupation of his thoughts, the promise he had made to remain.

"To-morrow!" echoed his fair companion, in a tone of surprise; "I thought you had decided to remain a day longer with us?"

"Dare I hope that you will regret my departure? But I cannot go, dear Miss Marsden," said Harry Thornton, collecting himself for the effort, for effort he still felt it to be; "without confessing the feelings which I entertain for you before saying farewell." ("Too cold!" thought our hero.) "No, dearest Annie!" continued he aloud, and taking the hand which she resigned to him; "I must hear from your own lips whether you reciprocate them, and if my love and sincerest

orders to settle an income of thirty thousand a year on them for their joint——”

“ My dear Sir John,” interrupted his lordship, as soon as he had caught the essence of his speech, and waving his hand with a magnificent air, as if altogether repudiating the topic; “ I am amply satisfied with every arrangement on that head: it is not the prospect of mere wealth which affords me such satisfaction—what is money, my dear sir, compared with the bliss of domestic happiness, and the pleasure of seeing our children united according to the dictates of their hearts?”

The worthy ex-merchant felt overwhelmed with this eloquent peroration, as he endeavoured to frame a suitable reply to the almost sublime and elevated sentiments of his noble companion; but he was spared, at least for the present, that difficulty. A footman announced that his lordship’s travelling carriage was waiting ready packed at the door; and shortly afterwards, Lord Deloraine and his son made their adieus to the circle assembled within the mansion, and were on the road to town.

It had been arranged, principally through Lord Deloraine, that the wedding should take place within a fortnight from the date of the engagement; as no obstacle existed to the marriage, and

some time had elapsed since the lovers first became known to each other. Till then, we will take our leave of the bride-elect, and return to her less fortunate, and unconscious rival.

CHAPTER X.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“SEPTEMBER 22nd.—MY husband has returned, but alas! even more reserved and distant than he was before. He has given me no particulars of his late visit, or the reason of his protracted stay. On the contrary, he appears to shun the subject, as if fearing my enquiries; and all my former doubts and apprehensions are revived with redoubled force in my mind. Can he doubt the strength of my affection after the sacrifices which I have made for him? or that there remains one which I would not make to banish a cloud from his brow, or a difficulty from his path, if it could only bring back our past happiness?

“September 23rd.—Is this man deceiving me? or, alas! let me say with more truth, have I not

deceived myself? Have I decked the idol in the glowing hues of my own fond imagination, till I start astonished at the sight of its real lineaments? No, no! he was all once what my woman's fancy pictured him to be; love, tenderness, and generosity, as surely as he has become the reverse of these things now!

"September 25th.—Several days have passed without my writing, for I am often ill, and too depressed for the effort. Yet strange to say, I can sometimes recall my gayest spirits while in his society; such power has his smile—his very presence over my mind! One hour spent after the manner of former days will suffice to transport me back in fancy to that atmosphere of happiness which surrounds me no more!

"September 26th.—I think Harry has ceased his mysterious visits to the city, which used to fill me with such alarm and uneasiness. He is now often occupied in writing letters, and will sit alone for hours. Occasionally a gentleman calls, whom he says is his father's solicitor, and has long conferences with him; but the purport of these visits is unknown to me. Whether it be pride, or shame, I know not; but there is, and must be, a reason for such extraordinary reserve.

"September 27th.—Last night I had a peculiarly strange and frightful dream, which was

impressed so forcibly on my memory, that I can remember every particular this morning. I imagined myself, weary and fatigued, ascending a steep and toilsome hill; the skies were dark and lowering—it was night, and I was alone. In vain I tried to discover a path to proceed, or a shelter from the storm; and I paused, irresolute where to go, when I felt a whirlwind suddenly rising on all sides, and carrying me along on the blast. A roar like that of a tempest filled the air, and I was impelled over crag and stone by a force my frail strength was powerless to resist, till I found myself on the bleak and barren summit, and shrank back in horror at sight of the dark and foaming waters below. I endeavoured to retrace my steps, but the hurricane which had impelled me on, equally prevented my going back. I shrieked, but the wind drowned my cries; I felt myself carried over the precipice, and in the very agony of the crisis, I awoke.

“It was a strange, wild dream! I can recall the sensation even now,—it was so vivid, and like reality. The rest of my night was sleepless, and I rose early to endeavour to forget it in occupation.

“September 28th.—I have received a new shock to-day. Another absence, accompanied, alas! with the same anxiety and suspense, is before me.

Harry is leaving home again, for a longer interval too than the last. It was only from accidentally overhearing some directions which he was giving a servant that I learned the fact. He started when I entered as he was thus engaged, and my feelings were hurt afresh at the surprise and annoyance visible in his gesture. I asked the cause of his leaving home again so soon, but he only replied in an evasive manner, that his father wished him to go to Ireland for a few weeks, but the matter was not yet definitively settled.

“September 29th.—Nothing more has occurred. Harry sat for more than an hour to-day, discussing unimportant matters, with not a single allusion to it. He was unusually calm in his manner, which was marked by none of the irritability and abruptness that have been almost habitual to him of late. But this calmness I could not comprehend; it appeared unnatural to me. Good God! has this man a heart that he can look on unmoved while breaking mine? Has he feeling, flesh, and blood like his fellow mortals, that he can talk placidly on trifles, while aware that my happiness depends on his fiat, and the very breath of his nostrils?

“What have I written? reproaches,—anger,—and against him! For the first time my pen has

lost itself in recrimination. I forget myself, and no less him. * * * * *

“September 30th.—Harry absent the whole of the day, which I spent in meditating on the changes in my lot. Where are the hopes and joys that once made up so fair a sum of happiness? Vanished like the fleeting hues of sunset, or the glory of a dream!

“October 1st.—Only a few days are now between me and this second separation; yet Harry has never informed me the probable length of his absence, or the object of his journey. These mysteries fill me with suspicions, the truth or falsehood of which I have no means of arriving at. I begin to doubt the sincerity of his former professions,—why are they not acted upon? Is it his father’s fault or his own? But I have often the conviction that he is not happier in this state of things than myself,—he appears to seek excitement, as if to banish all thought and reflection from his mind. Alas! he no longer cares to leave me alone, and often shuns an opportunity for confidential conversation, as if he feared I might avail myself of it to ask questions it would embarrass him to answer.

“October 2nd.—A circumstance occurred to-day, which has surprised me more than any previous occurrence. I was endeavouring to sing;

my voice, injured by want of practice, only feebly seconded my efforts, and as I paused for rest, my husband entered the room. He did not ask me to repeat the attempt, but placing himself by my side began regretting the loss of my voice. But what was my surprise when he suggested that the drier air of the Continent, or the genial clime of Italy, would soon restore it to all its former purity and strength? What could be his meaning? He endeavoured to elicit my inclinations, spoke highly of the pleasures of a residence on the Continent, without, however, intimating in the remotest way that he had any intention of going there himself. It is possible that he might then have cast aside his reserve, but a servant entering to deliver a message from his father, nothing more passed, and I was once more left alone to indulge my painful surmises. Was it possible, thought I, that Harry, despite his rank and apparent wealth, was in reality poor? Had his father refused to assist him in any way, and did Harry think—? oh! how gladly would I exercise my talents for his support! Could I have a greater happiness than to know that his pleasures and enjoyments came from my earnings? Yet I almost fear to suggest it to him,—his pride, perhaps, would make him reject the idea;—but he will recur to the subject again possibly.

“October 3rd.—Harry has been so fully occupied both to-day and yesterday, that I have had even less than usual of his society. But one consolation, at least, is left me to smooth my troubled path. Harry says he regrets taking this journey, and that he is only going to oblige his father. He has promised, it seems, to go to Castle-Delorraine for him, and assures me that his absence will not exceed three weeks. I think it was the incident of this afternoon which brought back something of his old tenderness and affection for me. For some days past I have been ill, and exhausted both in mind and body, but forbore to make any complaint till I was seized with a sudden giddiness as we sat together in the drawing-room, and before he could cross the room to come to my assistance I fainted, and fell to the ground. When my senses returned, I found myself stretched on a couch, and Harry trying every means to make me recover. I cannot describe the pleasure which this transitory return of his affection created within me,—involuntarily I closed my eyes again to prolong it,—I wished to die,—to breathe my last in these happy moments, and be spared future trials and sufferings. Alas! the powers of Nature are not vanquished so soon, and I slowly recovered. My husband was evidently alarmed at my

seizure; he wished to defer his journey, and even went to Deloraine House for the purpose, as he said, of inducing his father to set it aside. But did his disappointment equal mine, when he found Lord Deloraine immovable, and he made no further attempt to postpone it?

“September 4th.—Why do I still cheat myself with vain hopes? My husband is again cold and reserved to me as before. He shuns all confidential conversation, and seems to avoid the topic which he himself broached only two days ago. All arrangements are made for his departure, which I should have imagined, from seeing his servants’ preparations for it, to have been for a much longer period than the one he specified.

“October 5th.—It has come,—it has gone,—that long dreaded moment. My fortitude gave way at the last, and I wept long and bitterly,—twice on the point of departure Harry returned to bid me farewell, but even his tenderness failed to give me consolation. Never has my mind been so weighed down with such despondency as at the present moment. Oh, why is it given to some to feel all the joys of loving, while others only suffer its pains? Are there beings in the world whose fate it is to lavish all the warmth and tenderness of their nature without requital? ‘To

ask for bread and be given a stone?' Oh, my God! what misery is this life when unblest and uncared for,—for what good does the fair spring-blossom expand to the day, if the sun-rays come not after to ripen the fruit?"

CHAPTER XI.

WE have seen that Harry Thornton, moved at the sight of poor Ellen's evident grief and illness, attempted to set aside the engagement which he had so rashly entered into, but the influence of his father, and the fancied necessities of his rank, prevailed over his better nature, and he gave up the idea. The crisis was now indeed arrived, for rumour had spread abroad the flight of Lord Deloraine's agent, and the consequent pecuniary difficulties of his lordship; while one of those mysterious paragraphs, occasionally seen in the columns of a fashionable journal, already dimly hinted at "the embarrassments of a noble house, who held enormous estates in the sister isle."

The family of the Marsdens were among the few who remained ignorant of the catastrophe impending over their noble friend; for the whispered

An hour later and the vehicle stood at the door which was to convey him away, while the horses pawed the ground as if impatient at their master's delay, and the driver glanced alternately at the door and the gathering twilight, as he thought of the distance to be traversed before night-fall. And then at last the vehicle was gone, and there stood a solitary female form in the balcony above, with pale but lovely features and streaming hair, dimly defined against the darkening sky. And the rain-drops fall, oh, fast and heavily on that solitary watcher, as she stands there with up-raised eyes, and hands clasped in her soul's wild agony, appealing from man to his Maker,—from earth to heaven!

CHAPTER XII.

“ ————— I saw him stand
Before an altar—with a gentle bride,
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The starlight of his boyhood; as he stood,
Even at the altar, o’er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o’er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts was traced,
And then it faded as it came * * *
And he stood calm, and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reeled around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been,
But the old mansion, and the accustomed hall,
And the remembered chambers, and the place,
The day and hour, the sunshine and the shade;
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And she who was his destiny came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light;
What business had they there at such a time?”

tone; "you must be always at hand to explain their odious dialect, and——"

"Oh, readily; I can understand all languages," interrupted the young man, with an arch emphasis on the word. "My intuition is marvellous, and my discretion——but ask Lady N—— to tell you the wonders I performed in that line, when I superintended her private theatricals, and performed the miracle of keeping peace among three *prima donnas*."

"'Pon my soul! the whole thing went off uncommonly well—eh, Major?" remarked Mr. Fitzakerley, with the air of a connoisseur; and the stout major, who was engaged in rendering full justice to the merits of a venison pasty, yielded a reluctant assent. "Nice little giarl, Miss Marsden, aw—" continued that agreeable youth in the same patronizing tone, and looking half asleep from the combined effects of his early rising and champagne.

"Mr. Fitzakerley, must I remind you of the tenth commandment?" said Fanny Grant, laughing from the other side of her worthy parent.

"I was delighted to hear," remarked the Major, rather *mal à propos*, "that the police had got a clue to that agent of your's, Lord Deloraine, who

absconded some weeks ago. I trust the loss was no great one——”

“A mere bagatelle, my dear sir,” interrupted his lordship, magnificently; “the fellow took only a few thousands with him—several agents are employed on my Irish estates, you know.”

“Yes—the trust one is obliged to place in such persons is one of the drawbacks of possessing landed property,” replied the Major, pompously, whose paternal domain of moor and sheepwalk certainly gave him very little trouble that way, “Sir John, the pleasure?” and he forthwith hobnobbed with the worthy ex-merchant.

But now passed a certain mysterious signal between the host and his lady; the butler and his satellites again replenished the champagne glasses, and that rubicund and reverend prelate, the Bishop of ——, who had performed the wedding ceremony, rose to propose the health of the newly-married pair. His lordship was slightly asthmatic; nor was the flow of his eloquence sufficiently original to amuse the reader, doubtless well-acquainted with the formula in use on such occasions: but there was the proper amount of “hear, hears!” and applause; and shortly after-

glancing waters of the magnificent mountain-loughs, so common a feature in the scenery of Ireland. Nor were the remains of a former age, when Hibernia sent forth pious men from her cloistered seats of learning to spread abroad the first pure truths of Christianity in distant lands, wanting to invest the scenery with that interest which clings to the hallowed relics of the Unknown and the Past. Beautiful, beautiful even amid desecration and decay were the sunlit aisles and broken tracery of these ruined fanes, that stood grey and desolate in the solitude of some far-off mountain glen, where nature, ever young, renewed her spring-time verdure round them, as if to compensate for man's neglect. And what more solemn than the "stern round tower of other days," which, in mysterious grandeur, seemed to frown upon the degenerate race whose wretched hovels clustered round its mighty walls?

But the passing traveller, as he viewed the ruins of the past, or the fertile soil and picturesque scenery which were the lavish gifts of nature, turned away with surprise and disgust from the sight of the squalid and miserable peasantry that inhabited this neglected, but, beautiful wilderness; and almost experienced a sensation of relief when another phase of the various social

miseries of the country met his eye. In startling contrast, as it were, to the teeming population generally seen, there were tracts of land that appeared deserted by their inhabitants. For reasons best known to the noble owner, they had been dispersed from these parts by successive clearances till a broken wall, or a circle of blackened earth where the cabin fire once warmed its inmates alone remained to show where the farmer's homestead, or the labourer's hut had existed. But even walls of mud, damp with the moisture of the climate, would have been too tempting to the wanderer and the destitute to remain empty; and their former tenants had scarcely turned their steps to another land, when the old habitations, in which they first saw the light, were razed to the ground. For some few miles round the Castle the scenery, everywhere picturesque, was less wild and more cultivated, while a low and somewhat dilapidated stone wall marked the boundary of the domain; and so great was its extent that the traveller going westward could view for several successive miles the lofty trees in the large, and still magnificent park, and the grey turrets of the Castle which frowned amid their shade.

It was a glorious autumnal evening, when the carriage containing Captain Thornton and his

bride entered the confines of the demesne. They had arrived at the end of a long avenue, when a sudden turn of the road, and a short, but steep ascent, presented to their view a vast sheet of water fronting an elevated terrace on which rose a lofty and imposing pile of building, the hereditary fortress of the lords of Deloraine. Though presenting more than one style of architecture, as successive additions had been made by its various owners, the effect, if incongruous in the detail, was grand as a whole; and the gateway-entrance, flanked by massive Norman towers, and spanned by a single lofty arch, was worthy of the venerable pile.

“How beautiful!” exclaimed Annie, as her companion pulled the check-string for the carriage to stop and allow them time to survey the exterior; “what a splendid edifice!”

It would have been difficult to have chosen a moment when the place, beautiful at all times, could have appeared to greater advantage. A flood of golden light irradiated the building and the landscape, while it softened and mellowed down on the former, the traces (and they were many) of time and decay.

Originally built for a monastery by a colony of Franciscan monks about the year 1449, the whole of the noble façade and the western wing

was erected in the florid Gothic of that period, of which it still retained the distinctive marks in the high and richly mullioned windows, and the half-defaced statues of the saints, each in his pillared niche along the basement story. In the reign of Henry the Eighth the monastery and its revenues were confiscated to the Crown; but so feebly was the English rule established in that remote part of the island that it was not until the reign of Elizabeth, when the adjacent country was conquered by an English adventurer, that a grant was made to him and his descendants of the conquered district; and the half-noble, half-freebooter knight of Clanmoyle was transformed into the first Baron of Deloraine. By him were added the portcullis and the fortifications of a feudal fortress to the venerable edifice, and if the battlemented towers of the eastern wing gave the building a different character to its original destination, they increased it to more than double its former size. The remote and inaccessible situation of the Castle preserved it from the plunder and destruction committed elsewhere by Cromwell's forces during the civil wars. But traces of the more sure, though silent ravages of time, were apparent; the grey stone of which it was built was discoloured by age and the moisture of the

climate, the elaborate carving was defaced, and in some parts mutilated ; while the birds built their nests unnoticed from year to year in the ivy which mantled the walls. Opposite to the Castle was the extensive lake already mentioned ; its surface dotted with innumerable islets, covered with turf and the *arbutus* shrub, and embosomed in the woods of the park, which formed, as it were, a setting to the picture.

“ What a splendidly painted window there is in the western front,” remarked Annie ; “ has it been a chapel or an oratory ? ”

“ The former,” replied Captain Thornton, “ for my mother, though an Englishwoman, was a Roman Catholic, and it was fitted up for her private devotions ; but you will see the interior, which was decorated twenty years ago in the most beautiful manner by a young and talented artist Lord Delorainé brought from Italy with him. It is in the style (then a novelty) of the *renaissance*, with a profusion of gilding and colouring ; yet so admirably toned down that there is nothing meretricious or gaudy in the decorations.”

“ There is one painting I shall view with greater interest,” said the young wife, as the carriage drove on ; “ the portrait of your mother, Harry. Is it taken when she was in health and the bloom of her beauty ? ”

“It is in the library; judging by that she must have been very lovely, yet I have heard many of our old servants say it scarcely does justice to her beauty. Did you observe the flower-garden laid out in terraces below the western front? That was her favourite spot, I believe, though nothing more now than a mass of wild flowers and weeds: but stay, here we are, and yonder stands the old butler prepared to bid us welcome.”

The hall in which the travellers now found themselves had been the ancient refectory of the monastery, and in later days the banqueting hall of the lords of Deloraine. There was the same mingling of ecclesiastical with secular architecture as in the exterior; and the walls, wainscoted with Irish oak, were rudely ornamented with trophies of the chase and the branching antlers of the elk and rein-deer, whose remains are still found in the island. A large painting of the Battle of the Boyne, its colours dimmed and faded by the hand of time, was suspended over the huge carved mantel-piece, and corresponded with another of similar dimensions that represented the defeat of the Royalists at Marston Moor. Various ancient swords and pikes were suspended over these pictures; and a Deloraine having distinguished himself in each engagement by his bravery, there

were printed on the margin of one the name of the unfortunate cavalier Laurence the second baron who fell on the royal side, and on the other that of the more fortunate Lord Patrick, who, espousing different politics and a more successful cause, survived to see the triumph of Protestant ascendancy in his native land.

From the hall Captain Thornton and his bride were ushered into the suite of rooms which had been newly fitted up by Lord Delorainé's orders; but the fanciful French papers and fashionable furniture in these apartments, were little in unison with the wild beauty of the scenery without, or the marks of ruin and neglect in the remainder of the building.

The young and girlish bride was, however, too happy to critically note these discrepancies; and she gave vent to an exclamation of delight when, the duties of the toilet performed, she entered the drawing-room on her husband's arm, and perceived that it contained a superb grand piano, with a pile of the newest music carelessly placed on it for her use.

"Dearest Harry, how very kind of you to think of everything I could possibly want! One would imagine you had used a fairy's wand to transport all these beautiful things into the wilds of Kerry!"

The young man coloured with embarrassment; how could he undeceive her and say that the articles she so naïvely accepted as proofs of his affection, were provided in reality by the forethought of his father? So little had *his* mind been occupied with visions of matrimonial felicity and his future bride, that he had never asked the question if there were furniture in the apartments of Castle-Delorraine or not! Far different to the cares, the profuse expenditure he had lavished on the more humble sea-side villa, to render it worthy his Ellen's presence. Tact, that can alone preserve people in such dilemmas, had kept *him* from expressing his astonishment, or the costly wares and *bijouterie* of Regent Street, transported to Castle-Delorraine, would have surprised him as much as they did his more simple bride.

"My dear Annie," said he, somewhat gravely, taking her hand, "I am delighted to see you approve of all our preparations for you. We cannot, I fear, make the poor old castle very gay, but at least it shall be comfortable."

"But I like it so much, and its very stillness too; are you not pleased to exchange the dust and turmoil of London for this dear old place?"

Perhaps Captain Thornton could not exactly say he was, but he contrived to reply in another way very common with gentlemen recently

married, and which we are bound to conclude was quite as convincing and satisfactory.

"What a beautiful instrument," exclaimed the young bride, running her hand over the keys and playing a few simple bars; "how I wish I had talent to do it justice!"

Why did the handsome bridegroom suddenly turn his face away, as the sound of the well-known chords inflicted a sudden pang on his heart and conscience?

"You do not play, I think," said he, hastily, to divert her attention.

"No; I shall never become a musician," (Harry felt suddenly and unaccountably relieved), "for though I once essayed the art, I found my endeavours to acquire it were in vain."

But the old butler now entered to announce that dinner was waiting; and thus ended, as Captain Thornton gave his arm to his bride to lead her from the apartment, their first matrimonial *tête-à-tête* in the halls of Castle-Delorraine.

CHAPTER XIV.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“OCTOBER 7th.—Two days have passed since Harry's departure, leaving me almost unconscious of their flight. Yet happiness no more wings my solitary hours, or my former pursuits beguile them of their tedium; for my mind is incapable of any settled occupation. Even this diary ceases to interest me, for of what use is it to chronicle the saddest thoughts that surely ever dwelt in woman's brain?

“October 8th.—Am I grown selfish in my sorrow? I have been looking back to that last sad day of Harry's departure. How perturbed and harassed he seemed; yet opportunity there was none to ask the cause. He hurried to and fro, gave his servants numerous but contradictory

orders, postponed the hour of departure, then bade the driver make up by the speed of his horses for the delay. But why do I marvel at it? Is it the first time that I have seen him of late so capricious? It was not to linger by *my* side that he hesitated, or why did he not remain? It was not to console *me* for his absence, or why did he shut himself up for more than an hour in his dressing-room, and desire that he might not be disturbed? And yet I have reflected since on the tenderness and hesitation which he displayed at the last, with surprise—aye, (let me dupe myself no longer, but call things by their right names)—with suspicion! How different was it to his behaviour of late? Why should he have changed so suddenly then on the eve of a longer separation than any we have undergone before? A display of affection under such circumstances appears only the more refined hypocrisy! Harry, Harry—my still-loved husband—has it come indeed to this that my pen unwillingly applies such harsh terms to your conduct?

“October 9th.—Something has occurred to-day which effectually roused me from my apathy. My little French maid has always appeared attached to me; she is too, I believe, perfectly truthful; and unlike many of her class, rather taciturn than otherwise in her demeanour. Well,

yesterday, while occupied in her usual duties, she mysteriously remarked that the person who lets our apartments, and lives in the lower story, had been asking many impertinent questions respecting Captain Thornton and myself, and 'for her part, she thought Madame would prefer quitting the house than to remain in it for herself or her servants to be treated with a want of respect.' Astonished and puzzled to know what it all meant, I asked what were 'the impertinent questions,' rebuked Justine for entering into conversation with the woman, and reminded her that there were was seldom a quarrel in which there were not faults to be found on both sides. She then burst into tears; lamented that she had mentioned the circumstance, as she did not like telling me particulars, it was her 'indignation,' she said, that made her open her lips on the subject. In short it was not till I had firmly declared my intention of knowing what had passed, that she acknowledged the woman had dared to doubt, in no very measured terms it seems, the fact that I was married! 'That gentlemen often allowed persons to assume their names, who had no right to them; and that she should lose her situation if the owner of the house, who was a strict Methodist, ever

must do so as soon as I am fairly settled in my future abode—will he be grieved or angry to learn the result of his own reserve and extraordinary conduct? I feel reluctant to enter upon the task, but it must be done.

“October 11th.—Madame Leclercq has been here almost the whole of the day. She inquired after Harry, but did not display any surprise at his second absence; remarked I looked ill, and finally reiterated in more decided terms than before, her invitation for me to visit her at Kensington till his return. 'Tis a natural human weakness that we are gratified in sorrow and solitude by the sympathy of a friend; and lonely and unprotected as I feel now since encountering such insults, her expressions of kindness were doubly gratifying to me. But I hesitated long before accepting her invitation, in the dread of encountering strangers at her house; and at last only agreed to remain with her for a few days. During that time I shall hear, no doubt, from Harry, and then must be guided by his wishes where to take up my abode till his return—Pray Heaven it may not be long first!

“October 12th.—I have not had even leisure for thought to-day, which has been occupied in superintending the preparations for my departure.

“October 13th.—I arrived here last evening, and met with a most kind reception from Madame Leclercq. She assures me that my fear of meeting strangers is unfounded, and that I may occupy myself as I like best without fear of restraint. I feel a sort of thankfulness on looking back that I made her the confidante of my secret marriage—how friendless and forlorn I should feel in my present emergency without her aid and sympathy!

“October 14th.—I found leisure to-day to perform the difficult task of acquainting my husband with the events of the last few days. I did not breathe a word of reproach or censure in telling him the degrading surmises to which I had been exposed; and entreated him to write soon, that I might know to what part of London he would wish me to remove to when I quit the residence of Madame Leclercq. Having left my letter with that lady to send with her own to the post, I felt relieved and satisfied to think that I had taken the best course which was left me under the circumstances to pursue.

“October 15th.—I have been giving my maid notice to quit me to-day. Poor Justine! she began to cry directly I broached the topic; and declared she would rather live with a mistress like me without wages than serve others who

would give her them, but necessity obliged me to be firm—I felt I could no longer ensure the means to reward her services; and made her promise to seek another situation, which she did at last with no little reluctance.

“Evening.—Nothing of note has occurred. I have been occupied this afternoon in arranging with a sad and desponding heart the large stock of music which I brought with me here. How many tender and passionate recollections are connected with those songs, whose words were so often only an echo of our sentiments towards each other! Among the rest my eye fell on those impassioned strains of Norma, which are now so universally admired. There is something sublime in the character of the Druid priestess; as full of the elements of dramatic effect, as it is true to nature. What a striking scene is that with her helpless infants! Though ignorant of the tie, one can well imagine the intensity of the emotion—Ah, yes! maternal love is the only pure affection our first parents left on earth! Passion, selfishness, or sensuality have left their mark on all beside——

‘The trail of the serpent is over them all!’

“Does not a mother’s self-sacrificing love for her offspring faintly shadow forth the all-

abounding divine love of the Creator for his creature Man?

“October 16th.—I had a long conversation with Madame Leclercq on the subject of my marriage to-day. Only two persons have been entrusted with the secret—Justine, who accompanied me to the altar, and Madame Leclercq. But I cannot imagine that my husband will be displeased by my imparting it to the latter when he knows the protection which her friendship has afforded me. It was, alas! his own friends and relatives from whom he dwelt so strongly on the necessity of keeping it a secret. It was his own father to whom he either could not or would not acknowledge me as his wife. To avoid that has he cared to leave me exposed to wrong and insult? We discussed the subject some time, and Madame Leclercq appeared to fully enter into my feelings, yet I was not prepared for her concluding remark. ‘And now, my dear Ellen,’ said she, ‘can I hear of these annoyances without suggesting to you the means of avoiding them?’ I did not answer, for I failed at the moment to catch her meaning till she explained it. It was to lay aside my wedding-ring, and resume my maiden name, in fact disown my marriage till my husband’s return! Am I doing right to follow her advice? At first I refused—then reflecting

of my once unrivalled talent, is gone. No! Art requires entire, undivided devotion;—it is a shrine at which one must worship with the soul as with the intellect if one would penetrate the sanctuary, and attain perfection. Alas! for those who abandon the worship of their youth, till an hour comes when wearied and spirit-broken they return to the temple and seek the shrine, to find the god has fled!

CHAPTER XV.

WE will now beg the reader to retrace his steps in the path of Time, and return to the ancient Irish castle, and its present inhabitants. A bright clear autumnal morning followed the evening of the traveller's arrival at Castle-Delorraine. The calm waters of the lake shone like a sheet of molten silver in the sunbeams, the purple hills which bounded the horizon were fully defined to view, and the sunshine streaming through the painted glass of the richly mulioned Gothic windows, reflected its gorgeous hues on every object around. Annie and her husband were sitting in a small apartment, fitted up as a boudoir; like the rest of the suite, it was on the second floor, and commanded an extensive view from the windows.

"Do you see," said Harry, adjusting a tele-

her delicate beauty fully realized the sculptor's conception of representing her as rising from her tomb, to ascend, purified from sin, to her native skies. Paintings of the life of Christ from the Nativity to the Crucifixion were hung round the chapel, and as Annie contemplated one on the latter subject, she exclaimed, "There is something peculiarly sad in contemplating pictures of the Passion of our Saviour; yet surely He, who bade His followers rejoice, and bless His memory, did not intend us to dwell upon it in sorrow and despair. Is it not a relief to turn from the sight of that agonized face,—those muscles quivering with pain,—to this exquisitely beautiful Madonna of Guido's?"

Annie's judgment was correct—the painting *was* faultless, and the fair oval face, with the dark blue eyes and glossy braids parted on the pure open brow, exquisitely lovely; but what made Captain Thornton suddenly turn away at the first glance, as if insensible to the surpassing beauty of the face, and the excellence of the picture?

"Do you not admire it?" asked Annie in surprise, as he turned to leave the chapel.

"The subject is so familiar to one after travelling abroad, that one gets wearied with the same-

ness displayed in the conception," he evasively replied. "Shall we adjourn to the old portrait gallery?"

It was a long and narrow wainscoted apartment, with a polished oaken floor, and the diamond panes of the deep embayed Gothic windows admitting that "dim, religious light," which gives so piquant an air of mystery to the stately abodes of our forefathers. Formerly used as the grand reception chamber of the Castle, the ancient tapestried dais of the first baron of Deloraine occupied one end of the gallery, with the cumbersome suit of mail in which he had won his power and title. The arms of the same doughty knight were emblazoned on the ceiling, surrounded with the crests of every noble house who had intermingled in marriage with their line; and cumbrously carved settees were ranged along the walls, as if each had never known removal from its place since powdered dames in spreading hoops, or cavaliers with flowing wig and rapier, had met in stately conclave in that dim old gallery.

"How is it," asked Annie, as she lifted her eyes from the portrait of a Deloraine in the court-costume of the reign of George the Second, "that the family name on the margin of this picture is Fitzherbert, and not your own?"

"It was owing to the marriage of my

grandfather," replied the young man, "with Lady Mary Thornton, the only daughter of an English peer, that he was obliged to adopt her name, because her father by will desired it should be perpetuated."

"What a sacrifice," exclaimed his lady, "to renounce a name so ancient and celebrated!"

There was something bitter in Captain Thornton's smile, as he replied in a half-musing manner, "But there are many far greater than giving up a name, however ancient or honoured."

"Ah, true, dear Harry," said his wife artlessly, as, without observing his countenance, she continued gazing on the picture; "if he really loved her, there was nothing wonderful in his renouncing his name for the sake of winning his mistress!"

The equivoque was sudden, but natural.—Annie had unconsciously replied to his thoughts, rather than his observation. Her husband did not reply, but stood by her side gazing on the portraits with a look of abstraction; the words awaking a train of ill-timed thoughts within him.

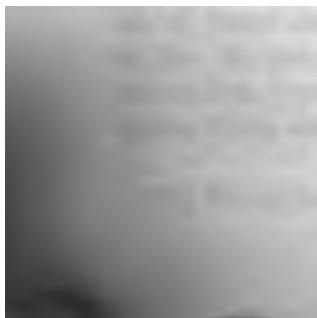
Yes — there they hung, those mail-clad knights, and proud churchmen, and ermined judges—And some had fought, and others tyrannized—they had given their blood for others, and

not unfrequently had slaughtered human lives to gratify their own revengeful hearts—but in right and in wrong, they were bold and valiant to uphold the name and honour of a Deloraine—Was it worth so much? It was a poor and paltry ending this—to sit idly day by day in that venerable home with the woman he had married for her wealth—but felt he could never love! Aye—for wealth—for the luxuries his hard and brave ancestors had never known, for the silken ease they would have scorned! And his father's smile, mocking as that of Mephistopheles, or his plausible arguments, returned not to his memory,—he stood there, confronted with the men and the deeds of the past—with the long years of the future, and the wife and companion he had chosen to share them with at his side! If placed like him, would this life of inaction been chosen by such a man as Ferrers Hartwell? But the die was cast—these wandering thoughts—what good did they? And the voice of his fair companion came to arouse him from his dangerous reverie.

“What a noble figure!” exclaimed Annie with animation, stopping short before a large picture, the colours of which were singularly vivid, and uninjured by time; “it is no doubt a genuine Vandyke!”

“Yes—the subject,” replied Harry, “is iden-

and the mail-clad heroes on its walls looked grim and ghastly in the twilight shade, when they quitted its venerable precincts; and we too will take our leave of Castle-Deloraine, to return to the other less fortunate personages of our tale.



CHAPTER XVI.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“OCTOBER 20th.—Again no letter: what can be the meaning of Harry's extraordinary silence? It fills me with the most painful forebodings, which nothing can dissipate. To-day Colonel Brydon called while I was assisting Madame Leclercq to sort some wools. There is something cynical in the flow of this man's wit and humour, as if he had drawn his pictures from the darkest side of human nature; so low is his estimate of its excellence. I was surprised once into involuntarily denying the truth of some of his conclusions, when he suddenly paused, and gravely fixing his eyes on me said, “I do not expect Miss Maynard to credit my assertions of the meanness of human nature, since she would pro-

bably judge from her own—of a loftier stamp than that of the ‘common herd.’” Not a little surprised at the unexpected turn which he had given the conversation, I relapsed into my usual silence, and did not again address him during his visit.

“October 21st.—Spent the day in brooding over my unhappy situation, which incessantly haunts my thoughts. Oh, why does he not send me a single word to repay me for all the annoyance which I have undergone for his sake?

“October 22nd.—Madame Leclercq has been urging me to go out, for the sake of my health and strength—vain, useless possessions—of what value are they without happiness? I think I gratified her by promising that if she wished it, I would no longer avoid her friends and visitors, as I have hitherto done. Madame Leclercq is kind, but too worldly to enter into my feelings. But solitude, when I can indulge in it, is still my greatest luxury, though a melancholy one. I often sit motionless now for hours, reflecting on my past life, and my present strange and unhappy position. Is it true, then, as I often ask myself at such moments, that there are natures whose affections are so deep, so true, and constant, that they must ever fail to meet with reciprocity from their more selfish fellow-creatures?—That for some there is affection and sympathy ever at hand

in their trials, and for others only isolation and neglect?

“October 23rd.—No letter still. Do I need another proof that my husband has ceased to love me? Surely no other woman was ever placed in so anomalous a position as mine. To screen myself from the insults which were the natural result of my husband’s not acknowledging me as his wife, I have been obliged to resume my maiden name, and move in society again as a free, unmarried woman! It was he first who voluntarily concealed his marriage; and now a train of circumstances has arisen, which compels me reluctantly to follow his example!

“Evening.—A melancholy listlessness has usurped the place of all my former pursuits, and my health begins again to give way under the constant pressure of anxiety. I sit for hours in Madame Leclercq’s drawing-room, abstracted in thought from all around, with my fingers mechanically employed on my embroidery-frame, unconscious of the different persons who may enter or depart. My mind is a blank, and a kind of passive despair chains every faculty.

October 24th.—Two things happened to-day, which temporarily roused me from my apathy; but instead of decreasing my unhappiness, they have only supplied me with a fresh cause for

uneasiness. During one of Colonel Brydon's protracted visits, he chanced to ask when Madame Leclercq and myself arrived in London. I could not answer his inquiries; and left my companion to reply, while a throng of bitter memories crowded upon my mind, called up by his questions. The tears sprang to my eyes, and I hastily quitted the room: how long it was after, I did not take heed to tell, when I found myself mechanically pacing the garden, to get rid of a feeling of faintness, and heard the sound of footsteps approaching behind me. It was Colonel Brydon. I looked for Madame Leclercq, but she was invisible; and unwillingly resigned myself to the task of replying to his inquiries if I were ill, made in a manner which I could not help thinking was very different to his usual cynical and indifferent tone. What could induce him to follow me there? Does he suspect that I have some unhappy attachment; and have I fallen so low as to be an object of pity to a stranger? But I hastily ended the interview, under pretext of joining Madame Leclercq; who, for some reason I could not understand, seemed angry and discontented with all around her, for the remainder of the evening. Nor did the Colonel appear more himself; his pride was evidently hurt at the repulse which his politeness had met with in

the morning, and he was silent and gloomy. But it was the first time that I had ever seen Madame Leclercq otherwise than the courteous and self-possessed woman of the world, and the change appeared as sudden as uncalled-for. Can I have offended her? The very conjecture is alarming, when I call to mind my utter dependence on her hospitality at this moment.

“October 25th.—Nine days have passed since the despatch of my letter. Good Heavens! is it possible that the once generous-hearted Harry Thornton can have become so callous and so selfish as to persist in his disregard to my appeal? That the fond husband who once literally showered upon me his costly and extravagant gifts, should now deny me money for the bare necessities of existence? The thing's incredible! At the time I came here, it was certainly in my power to have procured lodgings of a different sort to our late abode; but fearing my husband would not approve of the step, I thought it better to accept for a time the proffered hospitality of Madame Leclercq, and await his letters and a remittance. But a thousand trifling yet indispensable wants have now unfortunately absorbed the remainder of my funds, and I find myself absolutely dependent on the kindness of Madame Leclercq for support.

Pray Heaven that the kindness which she has hitherto shown me may not be withdrawn in such a juncture! But my part must be no passive one in it; to-morrow I will again write to my husband, and till then I will lay down my pen, and endeavour to calm my mind for the effort.

CHAPTER XVII.

ELLEN'S DIARY.—CONTINUED.

“OCTOBER 26th.—I have written again to my husband in the most urgent terms; surely he cannot harden himself against my second appeal!

“After giving my letter to Madame Leclercq’s maid to post, I returned to the drawing-room, where I found, to my surprise, several friends of Madame Leclercq’s assembled, who, with more zeal than tact, insisted on my singing to them.—Good God! what a painful effort! Colonel Brydon was present, but he sat motionless by the piano, and did not utter a word. It was a great relief when they rose to go, for Madame Leclercq prevented my retiring to rest.

“October 27th.—To add to the discomfort and unhappiness of my position, a change is percept-

ible in the former distant and respectful manner of Colonel Brydon towards me,—more in his looks and tone than words, yet both showing it. Can this man be a libertine? Is the mask of hypocrisy falling off to reveal him in his true colours? An odious suspicion has entered my mind since yesterday, but no—I cannot believe it,—I am over sensitive, and my fears and anxieties make me fanciful,—I will hope so.

“October 28.—No, I am not deceived; a hundred suspicious things daily passing places it beyond a doubt. Secret interviews are constantly taking place between the Colonel and Madame Leclercq, and my own independence of action is fettered in a thousand ways. . What is the end in view? Oh, Harry, Harry! canst thou indeed leave me thus to be the sport of the designing of my sex,—it may be of the profligate among your own?

“October 29th.—A sleepless night passed in reflections on my unhappy position. I am ill; wearied alike in mind and body, from suspense and anxiety becoming every day more insupportable to bear. Endurance seems to have reached its limits, and my faculties, from suffering, seem often plunged in a kind of stupor. What is the cause of this? There are moments in which I dare not conjecture. In how many shapes does

misfortune, or the cruelty of others, affect one's mind, and temperament? But one thought incessantly haunts my mind, and drives it to distraction. My husband has ceased to love me. Yes, the man who once idolized my beauty, and made it his sole occupation to anticipate my most trifling wants and desires, appears now to have forgotten my very existence! The period of his absence has now expired, but he comes not. Oh, God! will this cruel probation never end? Have I not suffered enough already? Am *I* singled out to bear a lot more unhappy than the rest of my sex?

“October 30th.—All my former ill-defined suspicions of Madame Leclercq recur with redoubled force to my mind. Why these secret interviews with Colonel Brydon, and constant endeavours to force his society upon me? I feel sometimes as if a net were spreading round to ensnare me in its folds, and escape was daily becoming more impossible. Where indeed can I fly for refuge? Alas! I am in their power. I dare not utter the word that would drive him for ever from my side. I dare not proclaim the name of the man who swore at the altar to protect me from injury or insult, for my life is become a compulsory course of dissimulation, which I am helpless to throw aside! Good God! should my husband still delay

his return, what will be my fate, left as I am, wholly at their mercy?

“November 1st.—Last evening I observed Madame Leclercq with the same fearful interest with which one would watch the movements of some despot on whose fiat depended one’s life. Calm and self-possessed as she appears in her ordinary demeanour, many things convince me that she is ill at ease within herself. When she seems to forget for a moment the presence of others, her brow often darkens, she starts as if some painful thought suddenly flashed across her mind, and her countenance becomes actually livid from some mysterious emotion! What is the secret history of this woman? Is it fear of impending evil, or remorse for some deed buried in the past, which produces such extraordinary changes in her demeanour? But she never alludes to her past life, and rarely mentions even her late husband. It is her manner, however, to myself and Brydon which fills me with such suspicion. She appears almost obsequious in her courtesy to him, while there is often a tone of arrogance in his voice when addressing her, which is most extraordinary when one reflects on the position which her wealth enables her to take in the world. There is some mystery, some intrigue going on here; would to God my husband would return, and release me from their toils!

“ November 3rd.—I am reduced to an almost helpless state of anxiety and nervousness. Still cherishing a wild hope that my husband will return and relieve me from all the misery which I have endured in his absence, a ring at the door, a footstep on the staircase, makes my heart beat, and the blood rush to my pallid cheek, till the door opens only to usher in the hated man, whose unwelcome attentions fill me with mingled alarm and disgust! Was not my position unhappy enough before, as a disowned and deserted wife, that this stranger should come to add insult to misfortune?

“ November 4th.—All disguise is at an end, and the events of the day have only too clearly revealed the unfortunate position in which I stand. It was after a sleepless night that I availed myself of a few stray gleams of sunshine to walk in the grounds. The withered leaves falling on my path recalled to my mind a thousand reminiscences of past happiness enjoyed in their bloom, and I had reached the end of the avenue, when the voice of Colonel Brydon suddenly startled me from my painful reflections;—‘ What a delightful morning,’ he exclaimed in a tone of easy effrontery, ‘ am I so fortunate, dear Miss Maynard, as to have an opportunity of accompanying you in your ramble?’ But surprise at this unwelcome